



# GREEN COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 7, 2024

3:30 p.m.

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Committee Members: Elizabeth Fiore, Chair

Administrative Staff: Dr. Jonathan Hart, Superintendent; Jason M. Bohm, SBA/Board Secretary; Timothy Charleston, Principal; Principal; Paul Nigro, Principal; Sarah Pauch, Supervisor of Math, Science and Technology;

Other Members: Betsy Freeman, Teacher; Steve Foster, Readington Township; Marlene Orlandi, Readington Township; Christina Albrecht, Readington Township; Eric Zwerling, Readington Township; Jodi Bettermann, Readington Township

## 1. Pillar I: Reduce environmental impact and costs

- Solar Array Expansion Update - Jason Bohm gave an update on the District's Solar Array Expansion project. Attorney & board finalizing proposal specifications, Town Planning Board approved. Public solicitation on 2/9. Review of proposals will happen in late March. Interviews will happen late March and Early April, those will be done in committee. The full board will vote on the winning vendor on April 16. CSG Law is our attorney, they specialize in solar projects such as these.
- 2 Electric Bus Grants - Mr. Bohm gave an update on the federal Electric Bus grant. Senator Booker will write the District a Recommendation Letter to help our chances in receiving federal funds. State of NJ is also rolling out grants for electric school buses. State awards will be announced in June.
  - The committee discussed air quality in relation to electric bus grants. Ms. Freeman and students are researching the air quality in Readington and offered to provide that data to Mr. Bohm for grant writing purposes.
- RMS LED Lighting / RMS Main Office HVAC & Natural Light - Mr. Bohm gave an update on green capital projects that are being discussed in Finance.
  - The district will fund LED lighting in classrooms at RMS in response to recommendations that came out of the most recent QSAC site visit. TBS and WHS are fully LED throughout their buildings. Part of HBS and RMS have LED lights, with the ultimate goal of 100% LED lights in the near future. The committee discussed the appropriate level of lighting necessary for educational spaces. Ms. Freeman offered to share the lighting assessment that RMS EcoAmbassadors recently did which were based on the Empower Schools guidelines. Mrs. Bettermann mentioned that district Policy 7460 Energy Conservation has guidelines for appropriate light levels.
  - The RMS Main Office area, which includes the wellness/counselors area is being renovated to remove asbestos and reconfigure space. Sunlit areas will be created in the renovated areas. In addition, roof mounted HVAC systems above these spaces will be updated so they can tie into existing systems with other buildings.

## 2. Pillar II: Improve the health and wellness of schools, students, and staff

- Wellness Policy & Tool - Mr. Bohm introduced Policy 8505 Wellness/NUTRIENT STANDARDS FOR MEALS AND OTHER FOODS which was last edited in 2017. He asked for Committee members to review the policy and give suggestions on wellness initiatives related to sustainability. In the past, this committee has suggested ideas such as utilizing Readington Open Space for field trips, daily outdoor recess/classroom activities, school gardens and outdoor classrooms, locally sourced ingredients for school lunches, and reducing food waste. These ideas could potentially be included in the Wellness Policy.
  - Food Hubs and Farm to School: Mr. Foster introduced an article entitled Expanding Local Food Access and Building Resilient Food System. He talked about Farm to School providers like those who attended the Earth Day Celebration last year. Mr. Bohm mentioned that Maschio's has been taking advantage of local suppliers, such as Zone 7, as requested by our District.
3. **Pillar III: Provide environmental education (STEM, civic skills, green career pathways, etc.)**
    - Water Watch Committee & 4th Grade Field Trip - Ms. Pauch and Mrs. Orlandi spoke of a partnership between Readington Schools and Readington Twp Water Watch Committee. Ms. Pauch and Mrs. Adhikari are working with Mrs. Orlandi and Mrs. Hulsebusch to design a new field trip for 4th Grade students that coordinates with the 4th Grade Life Science Standards. The idea is to visit a stream in Readington Twp with Water Watch volunteers. The Township's new Environmental Inventory will be used when designing this trip.
    - WHS Schoolyard Habitat Certification - Award / HSA Partnership - Mr. Bohm congratulated Whitehouse School for their recent designation as a School Life Habitat from National Wildlife Federation. This project was led by Dr. DeRosa and Mrs. Reardon with the help of the HSA!
  4. **Strategic Focus Action Plan Tracking Document** - Mr. Bohm invited Green Committee members to review the Strategic Focus Action Plan Tracking Document and be prepared for the May meeting with ideas for initiatives to tackle next year.
  5. **Unfinished Business** - Dr. Hart mentioned that a press release for the Taiwan Delegation Visit is going out to local papers.
  6. **New Business** - Board Vacancy- Mr. Bohm mentioned that there is a vacancy on the Board of Education and interested applicants must submit a resume by 10am on Friday February 9th.
  7. **Our next Green Committee meeting shall be Thursday, May 9, 2024, at 3:30 p.m.**