



GREEN COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Monday, May 13, 2024

3:30 p.m.

Committee Members: Elizabeth Fiore, Chair
Paulo Lopes, Board Member

Administrative Staff: Dr. Jonathan Hart, Superintendent; Jason M. Bohm, SBA/Board Secretary; Don Race, Facilities Manager; Timothy Charleston, Principal; Dr. Ann DeRosa, Principal; Dr. Kristen Higgins, Principal; Paul Nigro, Principal; Sarah Pauch, Supervisor of Math, Science and Technology;

Other Members: Betsy Freeman, Teacher; Gargi Adhikari, Teacher; Denise Birmingham, Teacher; Blair Alber, Teacher; Dr. Neil Hendrickson, Readington Township; Steve Foster, Readington Township; Marlene Orlandi, Readington Township; David Livingston, Readington Township; Christina Albrecht, Readington Township; Eric Zwerling, Readington Township; Jodi Bettermann, Readington Township

1. Green Committee Strategic Focus Action Plan

- a. 2023-2024 Highlights of accomplishments - Mr. Bohm presented a slideshow of the District's sustainability accomplishments that were achieved based on the action plan that was created for the 2023-24 school year.
 - **Pillar I Reduce environmental impact and costs** The '23-'24 goals were:
 - Energy: solar expansion which is ongoing. Electric school bus and vehicle charging grants are also ongoing.
 - Food Waste which is also ongoing.
 - **Pillar II Improve the health and wellness of schools, students, and staff** The '23-'24 goals were:
 - Nature: The importance of experiencing nature and being outside for the school community. This included activities such as:
 - Outdoor classes/classrooms created
 - Walking paths maintained
 - Storyboards/news productions
 - Walk in the Woods (7th Grade)
 - Reflection and mindfulness monthly activities and themes (RMS)
 - Rutgers Master Gardeners - science curriculum through garden study (WHS)
 - Map Madness Challenge - learn states on blacktop map (WHS)
 - Mellick's Orchard Field Trip (WHS)
 - Aquaponics @ AquaSprouts Farms (WHS)
 - Bohem Golf Center (WHS)
 - Turtleback Zoo (WHS)
 - Raptor Trust (WHS)
 - Picnic in Park (Gr.3 WHS & TBS meet-up)
 - Wellness Policies. The Board approved the Cell Phone Usage Resolution

and the district is still reviewing the Wellness Policy to include requirements of Sustainable Jersey for Schools language.

- **Pillar III Provide Environmental Education** The '23-'24 goals were Natural World Learning, Sustainable Jersey, Policy Review, and Green Coordinator.
 - Natural World Learning which included activities such as:
 - Field trips and Nature Hikes
 - T-Rex mascot to encourage recycling for Trex furniture
 - EcoAmbassadors programming for refuse and recycling for peers and also for HSA minicourses for elementary schools
 - Trout-in-the-classroom
 - Read alouds and highlighting book selection regarding animals and environment
 - Changing Landscape and Natural Resources curriculum focusing on geology and local community impact (Grade 2)
 - Wildlife Habitat Certification (WHS)
 - Gr. 4 Science Environmental Unit, enhance trail walk to focus on standards particularly land
 - Partnership with Township (Open Space Committee/Recreational Trails/ Other) for student programming and opportunities
 - Board reapproval of sustainability curriculum and climate education, embedding activities into student programs
 - Continued partnership with the Taiwan Delegation to foster education and career paths in sustainability among other opportunities
 - Civics students volunteered for Stream Cleanup (Grade 8)
 - Earth Day Celebrations (All schools)
 - Seeds and Plant Cycle lessons with Expert Gardener (Preschool)
 - Solar Eclipse Monitoring for NASA (Middle School)
 - Gardening and Gardening Clubs
 - Cross Curricular activities, such as a litter pickup challenge in P.E. Class (WHS)
 - Sustainable Jersey Certification is ongoing as 2024-2025 is a recertification year.
 - Policies - covered in Pillar II.
 - Green Coordinator - Green Coordinator position has been vacant for the entirety of 2023-2024 school year. Revised job description was approved by BOE in December 2023 to align with Green Committee goals.

- b. Brainstorming & Ideas for consideration for 2024-25 strategic focus - Mrs. Fiore suggested looking at Action Steps from Sustainable Jersey for Schools for potential strategic goals for next year. Committee members had several other suggestions, such as reducing mowed areas of school greenspaces and continued efforts in partnering with the Township Green Team and WaterWatch committees. It was also suggested to better communicate to the community about green initiatives and accomplishments.

2. Solar Array Expansion Update by Jason Bohm

- a. Current: Town Planning Board approved, 1st solicitation failed, 2nd solicitation due May 21
- b. Next Steps: Proposals scored by committee, winning vendor board approved in summer 2024, construction in 2025

3. Jodi Bettermann gave an update on the ChargeEVC-NJ Study recently released - Gable and Charge EVC released a study on electric bus charging feasibility and how to help districts acquire electric buses and infrastructure. Additionally, there are local resources through the EV Driven Program by GoHunterdon who is hosting a webinar on May 23rd for those interested.
4. Local Food for Schools Supplemental Funding - Jason Bohm gave an update on the State program to connect local farms with school cafeterias. Because we were involved in the program from the beginning, we were invited to continue to partner with Zone 7, a Hunterdon County farm.
5. Neil Henrickson reported on the Environmental Resource Inventory which is now active on the Township website. Teachers and Students and the Community are invited to explore this extensive database of all of the natural resources that Readington has to offer. Ms. Adhakari and Ms. Freeman said they are both incorporating this inventory into lessons and are encouraging other teachers to do so also.
6. Holland Brook / WaterWatch Committee Trail Lesson Collaboration - Ms. Pauch and Ms. Adhikari are redesigning a 4th grade field trip in conjunction with Readington Township's WaterWatch Committee. This new field trip will utilize open space in the town and will align with the 4th grade Science curriculum.
7. Our next Green Committee meeting shall be Strategic Planning by Board Members and District Administration over the summer of 2024. General Green Committee meeting shall resume in fall of 2024. Dates and calendar invitations shall be sent in the near future.