

HHS SCHOOL COUNCIL

February 28, 2024 (5 PM) in the HHS library and via Zoom

ATTENDANCE

Council members present: L. Accettella, R. Besser, G. Blidner, J. Lee, S. O'Horo, K. Sutton, R. Swanson, A. Varholak, and I. Whitlock (9 total).

Absent: G. Garland, G. Lafond, A. Lefort, K. Manning, J. Mathews, and P. Swanson. (6 total)

1 - APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the last two meetings (December and January) were approved unanimously.

2 - SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GOAL #2 (COMMUNITY SERVICE)

Key points from the discussion:

- A new community service requirement (10 hours per year) was approved by the School Committee as a pilot program for incoming 9th graders.
- Student speakers advocated at the meeting, aiding in its passage.
- Concord-Carlisle High School holds firm on “no opt-outs,” but HHS would consider exceptions for students struggling with mental health issues.
- We should consider streamlining, possibly using the Aspen student information system to document and track student participation.
- We should develop a list of potential “rules” to govern what “counts” as appropriate community service. For example, assistance with childcare at a church might be permitted, whereas teaching Sunday School (anything religious) would not.
- A current priority is to consult with HPS legal counsel regarding liability risks.
- School counselors should introduce the community service website during course selections to students and parents.
- We should emphasize that summer hours count.

- We could increase the visibility of the new website by pursuing the publication of an article in the Anchor; Carol Meyer of the Anchor could be a good ally.
- LA and KS will work on a grant request.
- We should develop an FAQ and distribute flyers to eighth graders at their “move-up day” in June.
- RS will share the link to the website in the weekly newsletter.

3 - SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GOAL #5 (UNITY WEEK IN REVIEW)

Key points from the discussion:

- Highlights included the Open Mic Night and contributions from the Breathe Out Club.
- Earl Granville (guest speaker) made a significant impact on students.
- Food drives at two basketball games led to a strong collection for the Hingham Food Pantry.
- Fundraising efforts throughout the week yielded more than \$1200, which was divided evenly among three charities: Maddie’s Promise, NephCure, and the Anna Quinlivan Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Looking ahead: The Hingham Unity Council (HUC) will host events on 3/13 (re: a mental health hotline) and 3/16 (“Let’s Talk Disabilities”) in partnership with the Hingham Historical Society.

4 - PROPOSED CHANGES TO MIDYEAR AND FINAL EXAMS

Council members unanimously supported a proposal that would 1) deliver exams by period instead of department; and 2) reduce the value of exams from 10% to 5% of the year-end grade.

5 - UPCOMING MEETINGS

Next HHS School Council meetings: 3/20, 4/24, 5/15, and 6/12