

MINUTES OF THE HINGHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

January 22, 2019 at 7:00PM

School Department Conference Room, 220 Central Street, Hingham, MA 02043

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Michelle Ayer at 7:02 p.m. Chair Ayer announced that the meeting is being recorded and televised by Harbor Media.

Members Present: Michelle Ayer, Carlos Da Silva, Libby Lewiecki, Kerry Ni, Liza O'Reilly, Kay Praschma, and Ed Schreier

Central Office Present: Dr. James LaBillois, John Ferris, Suzanne Vignes

Visitors Present: June MK Gustafson, Tony Keady, Melissa Smith, Rick Swanson, Bev Vernon, Kara Kremer, Kathleen LeBlanc, Mary Eastwood, Kathy Joyce, Jackie Sansone, Brianne Connolly, Dave Whitrap, Sam Whitrap, Sam Whitrap, Emma Quilty, Beth Wilcox, John DeYoung, Aisha Oppong, Joshua Ross, Becky Case, Erica Pollard.

2. Approval of Minutes

2.1 On a motion by Liza O'Reilly and seconded by Carlos DaSilva,

It was

Voted: To approve the minutes of the School Committee Meeting held on December 3, 2018 with the following edits in section 6.3: "Vice Chair Liza O'Reilly presented the report of the Screening Committee and an update on the Superintendent search process. The work of the Screening Committee has been completed. The Screening Committee is honored to present the full School Committee four finalists for further consideration: Dr. Paul Austin, Dr. James LaBillois, Dr. Earl Metzler, and Dr. Donna Straight. On a motion by Kerry Ni and seconded by Carlos Da Silva, It was voted: To accept the report of the Screening Committee and proceed with the interviewing and vetting of the candidates as recommended by the Superintendent Screening Committee."

Kay Praschma abstained from the vote since she was not present at the meeting.

3. Questions and Comments HEA President June MK Gustafson commented on the proposed resolution provided to all School Committee members by the teacher's union on the funding of our schools. Other school committees have passed this. June Gustafson is hoping that the School Committee of Hingham will also pass such a resolution. This is to be revisited at the next SC meeting.

4. Superintendent's Report Dr. LaBillois noted that the January 2019 Facilities report is in the packet. A flyer inviting SC members to Foster School's Computer Science Exhibition, which is to be held on Friday Feb. 15th from 8.45 - 9.45, is also included. Students in grades K-5 will be presenting their science projects.

5. Communications

5.1 Communications Received by the Superintendent: None

5.2 Student Communications: Student Emma Quilty reported that the Hingham High School Anti-Defamation League (ADL) trained with the ADL New England. The HS continues to earn a green ribbon status, the Student Council held a PingPong tournament for charity and HHS was honored more than 50 students in the bi-annual Andrew Warhaftig Catching Kindness Ceremony. The boys' basketball coach received the "coach of the year" award for last season. A new club was welcomed called the Yoga Club. It was announced that this year, all graduating seniors will wear red gowns. The class of 2019 is completing their handprint mural.

- 5.3 Other Communications. Michelle Ayer commented that she received an email thanking the school administration for the Consumer Science program being offered at the Middle School.

6. New Business

- 6.1 The Committee heard a proposal from Maggie, Alex and Will (fifth grade students from East Elementary School). They presented a proposal that all teachers are to read the book, *Wonder*. All fifth grade students should also read this. They believe it makes us all kinder and more empathetic. They ask that we consider this proposal. James LaBillois commented that he will follow-up with the 5th grade teachers at the next grade-level meeting.
- 6.2 The Committee received an update on ToolBox, the district's new K-5 social/emotional learning curriculum, from leaders of the HTSS (Hingham Tiered Systems of Support) task force. The four presenters were Kara Kremer (Grade 3, PRS), Brianne Connolly (Grade 1, Foster), Kathy LeBlanc (Grade 5, South) and Beverly Vernon (Grade 3, East). There are 4 approaches to SEL-instruction which brought them to the "Toolbox" strategies.

What is Toolbox?

- K-6 grade program, which manages social and emotional success
- Metaphor of "tools inside us"
- Simple techniques
- Shared language
- Curriculum connections, literature, woven throughout the day
- Home/school connections

There are 12 tools: 1. Breathing, 2. quiet/safe place, 3. listening, 4. empathy, 5. personal space, 6. using our words, 7. garbage can, 8. taking time, 9. please and thank you, 10. apology and forgiveness, 11. patience, 12. courage. After the presentation, discussion ensued.

- 6.3 The Committee received a draft of the proposed Secondary Program of Studies for 2019-2020. It was noted a memo describing the changes is in the packet. Discussion ensued. Liza O'Reilly asked how many students are eligible for the teacher assistant program in the foreign language department. Erica Pollard, Director of Foreign Languages, confirmed that the number is small. The request for this program came from the students. Some students have time and want to pursue their language studies further. Liza O'Reilly asked about the requirement for BC Calculus. Rick Swanson recommended that she discuss that with Dave Jewett, Director of Mathematics, for further information. It was noted that there is an additional policy change on what classes are included in the GPA. The GPA is only to reflect courses taken at Hingham High in order to promote consistency. Grades from other schools will still appear on the student's transcript. There are some exceptions such as virtual High School courses (approved by the Commonwealth) would still be calculated in the GPA. This will begin with the class of 2023. Communications will be made to parents about this policy change. Similar policies exist at other local schools.
- 6.4 The Committee received an update on Middle School Special Education program evaluation. Dr. Suzanne Vinnes, Director of Student Services, provided the members with a memorandum, which provides a timeline of where the department is on disseminating information to various stakeholder groups. The task force has been busy putting an action plan together. Michelle V. Porche, Ed.D., Clinical Associate Professor of Applied Human Development at Boston University, has presented to the task force on the findings in the drafted report. A series of presentations are planned. Carlos Da Silva asked if the School Committee members could hear the presentation. Dr. Vinnes confirmed that there will be a "community presentation" held on Feb. 1, 2019 and

presented by Dr. Porche. School Committee members are invited to attend. Time and location will be communicated. There is currently no final report. It is only in draft form. The final report has been requested and should be received a few days before Feb. 1. Dr. Vinnes also stated that there is a follow-up to the budget questions in the packet, which will be uploaded into the electronic folder. June Gustafson asked about presentations for the faculty. Dr. Vinnes confirmed that there are three presentations planned.

- 6.5 The Committee discussed the resubmission of the Statement of Interest (SOI) to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) for the Foster School Project. John Ferris presented the letter to the full school committee to vote on tonight. The letter confirms that an SOI should be resubmitted. This is a requirement for submitting an SOI. The application will be filed on April 12, 2019, so that any incidences during the winter can be included in the SOI. Discussions ensued.

On a motion by Liza O'Reilly and seconded by Carlos Da Silva,

It was

Voted: Resolved: Having convened in an open meeting on January 22, 2019 prior to the closing date, the Hingham School Committee of Hingham, MA in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated on or before April 12, 2019 for the Foster Elementary School located at 55 Downer Avenue, Hingham (Map Id 38/0/01) which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category(s) for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future for replacement of or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide for a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements. The building was built in 1951 and does not meet current code and significantly lacks environmental quality for natural lighting, artificial lighting, fresh air ventilation, and evenly distributed heat and cooling temperatures to enhance the educational environment. Classroom configuration does not allow for uninterrupted instruction, several classrooms have no natural light, the building envelope and windows systems are inefficient, and the steam heating distribution system and electrical systems are failing due to deterioration; and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the Town of Hingham to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

- 6.6 The Committee discussed fees for Kids in Action for FY'20. John Ferris described the different fees. It is a great value for parents since it is better than what competitors are charging (below market). This program is optional and is a valued service provided to our parents. There is a non-refundable deposit. Discussions ensued. Carlos Da Silva asked about which daycares we compare to. John Ferris confirmed that we compare our rates to other daycares in the area, who provide similar services. Carlos Da Silva stated he is not supportive of a rate increase since KIA is making a profit. Libby Lewiecki asked about the rate being the same for Pre-k regardless of the number of days used. It was explained that it is really a M-F program and not a 2, 3 or 5-day program. Overhead costs remain the same regardless of how many days a student partakes in the program. Liza O'Reilly noted that a rate increase is appropriate due to pay increases for teachers and staff. It is an optional program which is being subsidized. John Ferris explained that we charge for rent, transportation, heat, .3 FTE for a custodian. The cost of living is going up. Enrollment fluctuates and we do not want to lose the program if it quits making money. It was confirmed that last year the profit was approx. \$47,000.

On a motion by Liza O'Reilly and seconded by Ed Schreier,

It was

Voted: To approve the proposed monthly fee schedule for fiscal year 2020 for Kids in Action.

Aye – 6

Nay -1

Abstain - 0

6.7 The Committee discussed fees for Full Day Kindergarten for FY'20. In a prior September meeting, the philosophy of how to fund Full Day Kindergarten (FDK) was discussed. John Ferris thought he heard a general consensus of getting to a tax-payer funded FDK. He suggested that if that is the direction the School Committee wants to go than the easiest way to achieve this goal would be not to increase the rate so that the costs slowly become absorbed over time. The market rate adjustment, which includes most of the costs, is 3.82%. This also includes an approximation of the teacher pay rate increases. John Ferris included in the packet a chart with percentage increases from 0% to 3.82% increases in the fee for FY'20. Discussions ensued. Kay Praschma noted that the original intent with FDK was not to be a "free" program and it was therefore founded with a sliding fee scale so that all families could participate in the program. The idea to offer a free FDK should be a separate discussion from what the FDK rate increase will be. Kay Praschma wants to keep with the original thinking behind the program, when it was created. Ed Schreier asked about past increases. He also gave some history on when the FDK program was established. It was a 4-3 vote that it be a fee-based program. The Committee at that time was worried about the costs of the program, which were estimated to be a \$1 million. program. Ed Schreier agreed that free FDK is a separate discussion from tonight's rate increase. Liza O'Reilly suggested an increase of 2.74% which rounds to \$3750, which covers more of the contractual costs. She agrees that we do have to agree on the concept of free FDK as a Board and it needs to be a separate discussion.

Ed Schreier made a motion to increase the FDK fee for FY'20 by 2%, which was seconded by Carlos Da Silva.

Kay Praschma substituted the motion with a flat \$100 increase and that as seconded by Liza O'Reilly.

It was

Voted: To increase the FDK fee by \$100 for FY'20.

Yays – 4

Nays – 3

Abstain - 0

6.8 The Committee discussed fees for Pre-Kindergarten for FY'20. It was noted that this is a mandatory program. John Ferris included a chart in the packet with various percentage increases that ranged from 2% to 3.5%. On average, the rate increase has been 2% per year in the past. Discussion ensued.

On a motion by Ed Schreier and seconded by Kerry Ni,

It was

Voted: To approve a Pre-Kindergarten fee increase of 2% for FY'20.

- 6.9 The Committee discussed logistics and planning for future budget meetings. Michelle Ayer mentioned that the Capital Outlay Committee is meeting on January 23, 2019 and the School Committee with Administration is meeting on January 24, 2019 with regards to budget updates. Liza O'Reilly proposed to move the budget meeting to Sunday. It was agreed to move the budget meeting to Sunday and cancel Thursday's meeting.
- 6.10 The Committee discussed awarding House Doctor Design contracts. John Ferris explained that the School Administration would like to award house doctor status to four firms. These firms are designers with different skill sets. These firms have been interviewed and qualifications have been pre-checked. There are no financial implications for the district. The contracts will be for one year with two one year extensions. Discussions ensued.

On a motion made by Libby Lewiecki and seconded by Carlos Da Silva,

It was

Voted: To award all four designer firms "house doctor" status as recommended by John Ferris.

- 6.11 The Committee received notification of the overnight field trip of Hingham High School students to China on April 16 to April 24, 2020.
- 6.12 The Committee received notification of the appointment of Pamela Graham, Administrative Assistant at South Elementary School, effective January 14, 2019.
- 6.13 The Committee received notification of the resignation of Alyssa DeGeorge, Special Education teacher at Hingham High School, effective February 1, 2019.

7. Other items as may not reasonably be known 48 hours in advance of the meeting. None

8. Subcommittee and Project Reports

Long Range Planning: Meeting tomorrow before Capital Outlay

Community Outreach: None

Policy: None

Salary and Negotiations: None

Special Education: Meeting scheduled for February

SNAP: There was a memorial for a Hingham mom, Jess Adams, on Monday which is being hosted by Notre Dame & SNAP.

HEF: On January 15, 2019, Libby Lewiecki attended a meeting. They are finding creative ways to reach their goal of raising \$180,000, which is to help fund the Computer Science Program. For the month of February, 2019, there will be a fundraising campaign where donations will be matched.

Feb. 21st - Newcomer's Club is hosting a Glove-up fundraiser to benefit HEF

Feb. 28th - Informative coffee at the Community Center

March 24th - Orange Theory is hosting a fundraiser at 5.30 pm

March 29th - Spring event at Paragon Boardwalk in Hull

HHS Council: None

Carlos Da Silva wanted to bring everyone's attention to a safety event being held at the middle school on January 30, 2019. A movie titled *The Coming Storm* is being shown. This movie is not for students.

Libby Lewiecki reported that she met with the HMS Council today. The District Health Resource teacher, Karen Beatty, presented a draft of the youth risk behavior survey that will be administered to the 7th graders.

9. **Adjournment**

On a motion by Michelle Ayer and seconded by Kerry Ni,

It was

Voted: To Adjourn to executive session, not to return to open session, at 9.17p.m.

Michelle Ayer – Aye
Carlos Da Silva – Aye
Libby Lewiecki – Ayer
Kerry Ni – Aye
Liza O'Reilly – Aye
Kay Praschma – Aye
Ed Schreier - Aye

Respectfully Submitted by:
Kay Praschma

Documents included in meeting packet

[1-22-19 Agenda.pdf](#) 

[Item 2.1 12-3-18 Minutes.pdf](#) 

[Item 4 Facility Dept January Report.pdf](#) 

[Item 6.3 POS Memo 2019-2020](#) 

[Item 6.3 Secondary Program of Studies 2019-2020.pdf](#) 

[Item 6.4 HMS SPED Program Evaluation.pdf](#) 

[Item 6.5 School Committee Vote 2019 SOI January 2019.pdf](#) 

[Item 6.6 KIA Fee Options FY20.pdf](#) 

[Item 6.7 Full Day K Options FY20.pdf](#) 

[Item 6.8 PreK Fee Options FY20.pdf](#) 

[Item 6.10 House Doctor Award Recommendation 2019.pdf](#) 

[Item 6.11 China Trip.pdf](#) 

[Item 8 Warrants Signed.pdf](#) 