

MINUTES OF THE HINGHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

November 16, 2020

Remote meeting via Zoom

1. Call to Order

Chair Kerry Ni called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM. She stated that the meeting was being held remotely as an alternate means of public access pursuant to an Order issued by the Governor of Massachusetts dated March 12, 2020 Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law. Attendees were advised that the meeting and all communications during the meeting may be recorded by the Town of Hingham in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. Any participant who wished to record the meeting was asked to notify the chair at the start of the in accordance with M.G.L. c. 30A, § 20(f) so that the chair may inform all other participants of said recording. Chair Ni advised that the Harbor Media was recording the session.

Members Present: Kerry Ni, Carlos AF Da Silva, Libby Lewiecki, Liza O'Reilly, Michelle Ayer, Nes Correnti, Jennifer Benham

Central Office Present: Paul Austin, James LaBillois, Suzanne Vinnes, John Ferris, Susan D'Amato

Visitors Present: No sign in as this was a remote meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes

2.1 On a motion by Carlos A F Da Silva and seconded by Michelle Ayer,

It was

Voted: To approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting held on November 2, 2020

Michelle Ayer – aye

Jennifer Benham - aye

Nes Correnti – aye

Carlos AF Da Silva – aye

Libby Lewiecki – aye

Liza O'Reilly – aye

Kerry Ni – aye

2.2 On a motion by Carlos A F Da Silva and seconded by Michelle Ayer,

It was

Voted: To approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting held on November 6, 2020

Michelle Ayer – aye

Jennifer Benham - aye

Nes Correnti – aye

Carlos AF Da Silva – aye
Libby Lewiecki – aye
Liza O’Reilly – aye
Kerry Ni – aye

3. **Questions and Comments**

Chair Ni provided time for questions or comments on topics that were not included on the School Committee agenda. There were no questions or comments.

4. **Superintendent’s Report**

4.1 Dr. Austin shared a PowerPoint presentation that provided an update on the COVID-19 Health Metrics for the town and school. Hingham is identified as “green” based on the state COVID-19 rating system. Dr. Austin shared that there were two additional cases of COVID-19 in the prior week. Dr. Austin addressed the current status of the Reopening Phase III planning. Five busses have been attained; hiring and training of the drivers has not yet been completed. Work continues toward procuring classroom space at the former St. Jerome’s School. The district continues to work collaboratively with the Hingham Education Association (HEA). In response to a question by Libby Lewiecki, Dr. Austin identified that the St. Jerome’s property would require a need for a contracted nurse, custodial workers, a temporary administrator, teachers, and paraeducators. Chair Ni questioned if there was still a need to complete a transportation survey since buses were procured. John Ferris advised that it was important to obtain the buses in order to expand the capacity, regardless of the results of a transportation survey. A community member questioned the timeline for the Phase III Reopening Plan as well as the plan for expanding in-person learning on Wednesdays. Dr. Austin responded that January 2021 remains the target date for Phase III reopening, which will be dependent on space and union negotiations. In-Person learning on Wednesdays is also a matter of union negotiations.

5. **Communications**

- 5.1 Student representative Carly Kennedy was not in attendance due to her participation on the HPS volleyball team.
- 5.2 Dr. Austin acknowledged the passing of Hingham Middle School teacher James Quine. Mr. Quine, who taught at Hingham Middle School since 2007, was beloved by the Hingham School Community and will be missed.
- 5.3 Other Communications – There was no discussion under this topic.

6. **Unfinished Business**

- 6.1 Dr. LaBillois provided an update on the Equity and Inclusion Taskforce. He advised that the taskforce is in the process of making presentations to the six PTO organizations and SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Council). The vision, definition of equity, and current activities are presented at those meetings. Dr. LaBillois advised the team is preparing for a series of “courageous conversations” with students, alumni, faculty, and community members to obtain direct feedback on their experience in the district. The Taskforce will complete an audit, which will focus on twelve areas, including:

1. Teacher quality and diversity
2. Rigorous and empowering content
3. Instructional Time and Attention
4. Student Supports and Inventions
5. High Quality Early Learning
6. School Culture and Climate
7. Family Academic Engagement
8. Diverse and Equitable Schools
9. School Funding
10. Quality and Diversity of the Leadership team
11. Access to Learning-Ready Facilities
12. Access to Extracurricular, Co-curricular and Athletic Experiences

Carlos DaSilva asked that Dr. LaBillois look into the possibility of including Diversity & Inclusion Training for the staff. In response to a question from the Community regarding the PTO meetings, Dr. LaBillois advised that one of the PTO sessions has been recorded and will be posted to the website with a Google Form to allow the community to provide responses to four questions. Dr. LaBillois advised that the audits were an effort to supplement existing quantitative data and identify any areas that may not be otherwise addressed. Dr. LaBillois reviewed the timeline for completing the audit and launching the next phase of the program.

- 6.2 Dr. Austin provided an update on the FY22 Budget Calendar and Guiding Principles. The Guiding Principles had been updated to address concerns that were raised at the prior School Committee meeting. Libby Lewiecki asked for clarification on “key initiatives” that were identified in the Guiding Principles document. Dr. Austin responded that the key initiatives included:

- HTSS Tiered Support
- Strategic Plan
- Special Education Staffing
- Funding for Equity Inclusion Plan
- Central Office Structure

Carlos Da Silva asked to amend the Budget calendar to correct the date for the Joint Forecast Meeting with the Board of Selectmen to November 17 rather than November 10. Kerry Ni advised that Community members can attend Subcommittee or School Committee meetings to provide input into the budget discussions. Dr. Austin responded to a community question that the budget will be based on the normal enrollment for the district, as opposed to the reduced enrollment due to Covid-19.

On a motion by Carlos Da Silva and seconded by Jen Benham,

It was

Voted: To approved the FY 22 Budget Calendar, as amended to correct the date of the Joint Forecast meeting, and the FY 22 Budget Guiding Principles document.

Michelle Ayer – aye

Jen Benham – aye

Nes Correnti – aye
Carlos AF Da Silva – aye
Libby Lewiecki – aye
Liza O’Reilly – aye
Kerry Ni – aye

6.3 The Committee completed a third read of the proposed policy section J (Students) of the Hingham Public Schools Policy Manual. Chair Ni reviewed a list of the topics that are included in Section J and advised that the Hingham Policies were reviewed against the Massachusetts Association of School Committee sample policies. There was no further discussion among the Committee on Section J and no questions from the community.

On a motion by Liza O’Reilly and seconded by Libby Lewiecki,

It was

Voted: To adopt Policy Section J (Students) of the Hingham Public Schools Policy Manual, in form.

Michelle Ayer – aye
Jen Benham – aye
Nes Correnti – aye
Carlos AF Da Silva – aye
Libby Lewiecki – aye
Liza O’Reilly – aye
Kerry Ni – aye

7. New Business

7.1 The Committee received the Superintendent’s Evaluation Rubric for 2020 -2021. Chair Ni advised that the Executive Committee previously met with Dr. Austin to determine which of the indicators on the Evaluation Rubric were most critical to focus on for this school year. Dr. Austin identified the Key Indicators as follows:

- For Standard 1(Instructional Leadership): Key Indicator is Student Engagement
- For Standard 2 (Management & Operations): Key Indicators are Student Health & Safety, Recruitment & Hiring Strategies
- For Standard 3 (Family and Community Engagement): Key Indicators are Community & Stakeholder Engagement, Culturally Proficient Communication
- For Standard 4 (Professional Culture): Key Indicators are Communication Skills, Shared Vision Development

Chair Ni advised that the Superintendent will be providing goals for the identified standards, which will be used to evaluate the Superintendent in the spring. There was further discussion among Dr. Austin and the Committee that all of the indicators on the Rubric are considered important, but the indicators that have been identified will be used for the purposes of evaluation.

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

It was

Voted: To approve the Superintendent's Evaluation Rubric for 2020-2021 as recommended.

Michelle Ayer – aye

Jen Benham – aye

Nes Correnti – aye

Carlos AF Da Silva – aye

Libby Lewiecki – aye

Liza O'Reilly – aye

Kerry Ni – aye

7.2 The Committee received an update on the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Hingham Public Schools Operating Budget. Dr. Austin advised that the purpose of the upcoming Joint Meeting with the Board of Selectman is to review the Austerity Plan that was established with the town. John Ferris reviewed two budget documents that outlined budget projections and the expected impact of COVID-19 on the budget. His overview included Estimated COVID Related Impacts, Lost Revenue, and Estimated Reimbursements from the Plymouth County Cares Act. The two documents that Mr. Ferris reviewed were titled:

- FY21 Forecast as of November 3, 2020.
- Incremental COVID Expenses

Dr. Austin added the situation is continually changing so the community must be cautious about the future. In response to a question from Liza O'Reilly, Mr. Ferris reviewed the total estimated COVID Impacts (including both incremental costs and lost revenue) and provided a breakdown of which costs were not reimbursable and which costs may be reimbursable.

Libby Lewiecki questioned the costs for Remote Teachers, which was pro-rated based on the numbers of days they would be working. The Remote Teachers have not been hired as of yet.

Carlos Da Silva questioned whether Mr. Ferris knew, at this point, the amount of reimbursable expenses associated with payroll. Mr. Ferris advised that he does not yet know that amount. He has contacted Plymouth County to determine the level of detail that would be required for the submission. The Town of Hingham is eligible for \$3.6M, and Mr. Ferris advised that he estimates approximately \$2.4M of COVID reimbursable expenses for the schools based on the 12/30/20 deadline provided. Michelle Ayer suggested that community members that are looking for a way to support the town and schools could write to their elected representatives regarding the funding of the CARES Act and similar programs.

7.3 Dr. Austin advised that he has reviewed the Home School application for students AL (Grade 3) and AL (Grade 5) for FY2021 and recommended approval.

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

It was

Voted: To approve the Home School application for students AL (Grade 3) and AL (Grade 5) for FY2021 as recommended by the Superintendent

Michelle Ayer – aye

Jen Benham – aye

Nes Correnti – aye

Carlos AF Da Silva – aye

Libby Lewiecki – aye

Liza O’Reilly – aye

Kerry Ni – aye

- 7.4 The Committee received notification of the appointments of Lauren Cunio, Speech Language Pathologist at HHS, effective 11/9/20, and Alicia Barry, Paraeducator at South Elementary, effective 11/2/2020.
- 7.5 The Committee received notification of advancement on the salary scale for Kate Tortola to M+30, effective 9/1/2020.
- 7.6 The Committee received notification of the resignations for the 2020-2021 school year of Math Tutor Thomas McNamee (Foster, effective 10/30/20), and the following Paraeducators - Elizabeth Vialle (HMS, effective 11/2/20); Jaclyn Sanford (HHS, effective 9/4/20); Elizabeth Doherty (Foster, effective 11/9/20); Mitchell Cameron (East, effective 7/31/20); Kathryn Foisy (HHS, effective 8/18/20); Gwen Traynor (East, effective 7/24/20); Caitlin Ogar (HMS, effective 8/16/20); Jared Grimm (HMS, effective 8/31/2020); Sofia Verras (HMS, effective 8/26/20); Emily Kuhn (Foster, effective 8/25/20); Jennifer Bleakney (Foster, effective 8/31/20).

8. **Subcommittee and Project Reports**

Michelle Ayer provided the following updates:

- A SEPAC (Special Education Parents Advisory Committee) meeting was held, which Dr. LaBillois attended to address the work from the Equity Taskforce.
- METCO parents met with Dr. Austin on 11/5/20 for a “Coffee with the Superintendent”. Dr. Austin will continue to hold these meetings on a monthly basis.
- On 11/30/20 at 7:30 PM there will be a roundtable for METCO parents and students of color. This is an opportunity for parents to share perspectives on their experiences in the HPS system.
- Ms. Ayer and Dr. LaBillois have been attending weekly meetings with the METCO director and other districts’ leadership teams to plan for a leadership retreat in December that will focus on providing education with an anti-racism lens and how to highlight the METCO program.
- The Design Enrollment for Foster School Building Committee was completed and will be for 605 students.

Jen Benham provided the following updates:

- The Foster School Council meeting was held on 11/4/2020. Foster is in the second year of their School Improvement Plan. The Kindness Club is working in collaboration with the HHS Kindness Club. The next School Council Meeting is scheduled for January 6, 2020.
- Dr. LaBillois will attend the Foster School PTO on Thursday at 7PM to provide an update on

the Equity and Inclusion Taskforce.

Nes Correnti provided the following updates:

- The Equity Taskforce provided updates at PTO sessions for HHS, South, and PRS, and at the SEPAC meeting.
- Finance – There are two warrants included in the School Committee packet for review.

Carlos Da Silva provided the following updates:

- The PRS School Council meeting was held on November 9, 2020. They are working on their Improvement Plan. PRS held a Veteran's Day celebration, in which many students presented about veterans.
- Mr. Da Silva attended a SNAP (Special Needs Athletic Partnership) meeting last week. Their fall sports program has wrapped up.
- The next meeting of Capital & Facilities Subcommittee is on December 8, 2020.
- Mr. Da Silva attended the Massachusetts Association of School Committees Conference as the Hingham delegate. The group passed 9 of the 10 resolutions that had been proposed at a prior meeting.

Libby Lewiecki provided the following updates:

- The South School Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 18.
- The Community Outreach Subcommittee is scheduling additional Coffees with the Superintendent for February and April.

Liza O'Reilly provided the following updates:

- The Master Plan Committee met the prior week and will meet again on 11/17/2020 and 12/9/2020. The Committee is finalizing the goals and recommendations and will present a draft at a public meeting on 12/16/2020.

Kerry Ni provided the following updates:

- The Policy Committee met to discuss Sections I (Instruction) and D (Fiscal Management). These sections will be sent to the appropriate staff for review. The next meeting of the Policy Committee will be on December 2, 2020 to work on Section G (Personnel).
- Dr. Austin and Chair Ni will attend the HMS PTO meeting on 11/19/2020 for an informal Q&A.

9. Other items as may not reasonably be known 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Dr. Austin announced the retirement of Executive Assistant Julie O'Halloran and the hiring of Marianne Gates as the new Executive Assistant.
10. On a motion by Liza O'Reilly and seconded by Michelle Ayer,

It was

Voted: To adjourn to Executive Session at 9:00 PM, not to return to Open session, for the purposes of:

1. Approving minutes of the Executive Session held on November 2, 2020
2. Discussing strategy related to collective bargaining negotiations with HEA Unit A and B

the public discussion of which may be detrimental to the committee's bargaining position.

Michelle Ayer – aye
Jen Benham - aye
Nes Correnti – aye
Carlos AF Da Silva – aye
Libby Lewiecki – aye
Liza O’Reilly – aye
Kerry Ni – aye

Respectfully Submitted By:
Libby Lewiecki

Documents Included:

Name	↑
 Agenda_2020_1116.pdf	
 Annotated Agenda_2020_1116.pdf	
 Item 2.1 11-2-20 Minutes Submitted.pdf	
 Item 2.2 11-6-20 Minutes (Coffee with Superintendent).pdf	
 Item 4.1 Health Metric Update_2020_1116.pdf	
 Item 6.2 FY 22 Budget Calendar Proposed.pdf	
 Item 6.2 FY'22 Guidelines Revised for November 16 2020.pdf	
 Item 6.3 Section J index - merged.pdf	
 Item 6.3 Section J - merged.pdf	
 Item 7.1 Superintendent's Evaluation Rubric_2020_1112c.pdf	
 Item 7.2 Forecast snapshot 11.10.20 revised.pdf	
 Item 7.2 Incremental COVID Expenses Snapshot 11.9.20.pdf	
 Item 7.3 Home School Application (2 students).pdf	
 Item 8 Warrants (2).pdf	