

MINUTES OF THE HINGHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

April 5, 2021

Remote meeting via Zoom

1. **Call to Order**

Chair Kerry Ni called the meeting to order at 6:00 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. No other participants indicated that they would be recording the meeting.

Members Present: Kerry Ni, Carlos A.F. DaSilva, Libby Lewiecki, Liza O'Reilly, Michelle Ayer, Nes Correnti, Jennifer Benham

Central Office Present: Dr. Paul Austin

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

2. On a motion by Liza O'Reilly and seconded by Carlos A.F. DaSilva, it was **voted**:

To enter into Executive Session and to reconvene in Open Session for the purposes of:

1. Approving minutes of the Executive Session held on March 22, 2021.
2. To discuss a Memorandum of Agreement with the Hingham Education Association (HEA) Unit A

Michelle Ayer - aye
Jennifer Benham - aye
Nes Correnti - aye
Carlos A.F. DaSilva
Libby Lewiecki – aye
Liza O'Reilly – aye
Kerry Ni – aye

The meeting entered into Executive Session at 6:03.

3. **Chair Ni reconvened the meeting at 7:00 PM.** Chair Ni re-read the above statement regarding remote meetings and recording and advised that Harbor Media was recording the session.

Members Present: Kerry Ni, Carlos A.F. DaSilva, Libby Lewiecki, Liza O'Reilly, Michelle Ayer, Nes Correnti, and Jennifer Benham

Central Office Present: Dr. Paul Austin, Dr. James LaBillois, Dr. Suzanne Vinnes, John Ferris, and SusanD'Amato

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

4. **Approval of Minutes**

- 4.a. On a motion by Carlos AF Da Silva and seconded by Nes Correnti,
It was **voted:** To approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting held on March 17, 2021
(Joint meeting with ACES)

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

- 4.b. On a motion by Carlos AF Da Silva and seconded by Nes Correnti,
It was **voted:** To approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting held on March 22, 2021
(Joint meeting with ACES)

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

- 4.c. On a motion by Carlos AF Da Silva and seconded by Nes Correnti,
It was **voted:** To approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting held on March 22, 2021

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

- 4.d. The Committee noted that the meeting held on March 23, 2021 of the Community Outreach Subcommittee, did not have a quorum, and therefore they did not vote on approving the minutes of that meeting.

- 4.e. On a motion by Carlos AF Da Silva and seconded by Nes Correnti,
It was **voted:** To approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting held on March 23, 2021
(Joint meeting with Board of Selectmen)

Michelle Ayer – aye
Jennifer Benham - aye
Nes Correnti – aye
Carlos AF Da Silva – aye
Libby Lewiecki – aye

Liza O'Reilly – aye

Kerry Ni – aye

- 4.f. On a motion by Carlos AF Da Silva and seconded by Nes Correnti,
It was **voted**: To approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting held on March 25, 2021
(Joint Meeting with Advisory Committee)

Michelle Ayer – aye

Jennifer Benham - aye

Nes Correnti – aye

Carlos AF Da Silva – aye

Libby Lewiecki – aye

Liza O'Reilly – aye

Kerry Ni – aye

5. **Questions and Comments from the Community:** There were no questions or comments at this time.

6. **Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Austin gave a presentation that included:

- Updates of the COVID-19 health data in the community and in HPS
- Updates on the results of staff testing and student pool testing
- Travel Protocol and Reminder for Families
- Updates on the increases in In-Person Learning

Committee members expressed thanks to teachers, staff, and families for working to get students back in school and encouraged families to consider taking part in the pool testing.

Questions and Comments from the Community included:

- a question about the High School schedules

7. **Communications**

7.1 Student Communications: Student Representative Carly Kennedy provided an update from the schools, thanking the teachers and staff for working to get students back to school. She stated that today students were excited to be back, the school was decorated by the Student Council, and seniors wore their senior shirts to school. Ms. Kennedy reported that the band, orchestra, chorus, and drama clubs were able to meet in person and the National Honor Society ceremony will be held in person in the future. She reported that seven students are finalists for National History Day, and have been selected to go to the next round. Ms. Kennedy also reported that two seniors are in the State DECA Competition.

7.2 Superintendent Communications

Dr. Austin thanked all the teachers, support staff and parents for their efforts to make the students' return to school possible.

7.3 Committee member Liza O'Reilly read a memo that she submitted to the Master Plan Committee, noting that she participated as a member of that committee. In the memo, Ms. O'Reilly encourages the Committee to continue to have school representation for future Master Plan updates and Committees.

8. Unfinished Business

- 8.1 Dr. Austin presented an updated FY '22 Budget and explained that the change will make the finalized proposal of \$61,792,079 in line with the number voted on by the Board of Selectmen and Advisory Committee.

On a motion by Carlos AF Da Silva and seconded by Michelle Ayer,

It was **voted**: To approve the proposed FY 2022 Budget to align with the figures voted on by the Board of Selectmen and the Advisory Committee of \$61,792,079.

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

- 8.2 The Committee discussed a proposed District Statement of Equity and Inclusion. Michelle Ayer read the proposed policy statement promoting diversity, equity and inclusion. Liza O'Reilly made some recommendations regarding the statement. Carlos DaSilva suggested diversity training as professional development for staff. Michelle Ayer noted recent events in other communities and questioned if some aspects of this could be implemented in the near future. Dr. LaBillois stated that he will be preparing an equity update for an upcoming meeting, and mentioned training that will be taking place in Restorative Justice Practices. Liza O'Reilly and Michelle Ayer suggested that the Policy Subcommittee look at the student handbook to see if there are corrections that need to be made.

Questions and comments from the Community included:

- A concern noting urgency to implement a policy in light of recent events in other communities
- A question as to whether some aspects can be implemented soon, while it continues to be a work in progress
- A suggestion that students be given a voice in the policy revision

9. New Business

- 9.1 Assistant Superintendent, Dr. James LaBillois, gave a presentation on a proposed Summer School Program. The presentation included:
- Information regarding Acceleration Academies focused on math and reading to take place at all grade levels in the month of August
 - District acceleration goals
 - Selection criteria and procedures
 - Program capacity
 - Health and safety protocols for summer programming

Dr. Suzanne Vinnes, Director of Student Services, explained that the extended school year (ESY) program for students with disabilities will be similar to what has been done in previous years, and that those students are also eligible to be considered for the summer acceleration academies.

Dr. LaBillois explained the anticipated recruiting for staff and proposed student to teacher ratio, and

noted the funding is from a Hingham Education Foundation grant.

Questions and Comments from the Community included:

- A question asking if students' IEPs would be considered as part of student selection.

9.2 The Committee discussed a potential travel policy revision.

Chair Ni read a proposed Travel Policy Revision that the Policy Subcommittee has drafted, stating that the hope is to draft a policy prior to the April vacation.

Committee member Libby Lewiecki commented that it is important for families to cooperate to ensure that students will stay healthy, and be able to participate in end-of-year activities.

Dr. Austin stated that after a break, the pattern has shown an increase in COVID cases, and with year-end activities, it is important for students in all grade levels who have traveled to test before returning to school.

Questions and Comments from the Community included:

- A question asking if the quarantine requirements would differ for students who may have already been vaccinated
- A question if the policy is referring to travel to all states
- A concern regarding recent reports of variants of the virus, and the fear that people will still travel during April vacation
- A question about whether the policy follows state guidelines
- A question about the timing of the pool testing being offered
- A question as to whether a student that has to quarantine would be able to have remote access to the classroom
- A question asking if this policy relates just to the upcoming April vacation, or any vacation
- A comment that the policy seems difficult to enforce

Chair Ni explained that this is a voluntary policy, and that everyone has to do their part to keep students safe. The Committee decided to schedule a meeting for the following week, April 12, 2021 at 6:00 PM, to discuss the travel policy.

10. **Subcommittee and Project Reports**

Michelle Ayer reported that SEPAC held their monthly meeting last week and the board needs new members. She stated the Foster Building Committee is moving ahead and the High School Advisory Committee has been meeting to prepare for the students' full return on April 26th.

Carlos DaSilva reported the dates of the upcoming Plymouth River School Council meetings.

Libby Lewiecki reported that the Hingham Public Schools website is in good shape thanks to Dr. LaBillois, and they are looking at increasing its accessibility for those with disabilities.

Liza O'Reilly reported that there is an upcoming Salary and Negotiations Subcommittee meeting with the HEA.

Kerry Ni reported that the Policy Subcommittee met earlier in the day. She also noted that the annual Town Meeting will be held on Saturday, May 8, 2021 at 2:00 and the School Committee will meet prior to that at 1:30 PM.

11. **Warrants Signed:** Nes Correnti noted the recently signed warrants.

On a motion by Michelle Ayer and seconded by Carlos AF DaSilva,





























It was

Voted: To Adjourn at 8:52PM

Michelle Ayer – aye
Jennifer 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:

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-  [Agenda_2021_0405.pdf](#) 
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-  [Annotated Agenda_2021_0405.pdf](#) 
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-  [Item 4a. 3_17_2021 School Committee_ACES.pdf](#) 
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-  [Item 4b. 3_22_2021 School Committee_ACES.pdf](#) 
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-  [Item 4c. 03_22_21 Minutes.pdf](#) 
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-  [Item 4d. 3_23_21 Community Outreach Minutes.pdf](#) 
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-  [Item 4e. 3_23_2021 Joint meeting SC_BOS minutes.pdf](#) 
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-  [Item 4f. 3_25_2021 School Committee_ACES.pdf](#) 
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-  [Item 6. Superintendent's Update_2021_0405 Revised \(1\).pdf](#) 
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-  [Item 7.3 March 29. LRO comments on Master Plan.pdf](#) 
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-  [Item 8.1 FY 22 - Budget Update 4.5.21 \(2\).pdf](#) 
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-  [Item 8.2 Draft School Committee DEI Action Statement.pdf](#) 
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-  [Item 9. Summer Acceleration Academies.pdf](#) 
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-  [Item 11 Warrants signed.pdf](#) 
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