

**HADLEY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS 01035
March 27, 2023**

Zoom Meeting: 5:30 PM – Regular Meeting

Hadley Public Schools – We are guided by the mission to provide a safe and supportive environment that fosters cooperation, critical thinking, creativity, and integrity; and educating students to contribute positively to a global society.

Present: H. Fasihuddin, T. Brugger, E. Percy, P. Phifer, C. Pipczynski, A. McKenzie

Student Representative: Grant Donta-Venman

Absent: None

Guests: April Camuso, Joyce Chunglo, Chris Desjardins, Tony Fyden, Brandi Fill

1. Call to Order:

Motion: Pipczynski Second: Percy Vote: 4-0-0

2. Adjustments to the Agenda

A. McKenzie reviewed adjustments to agenda – asked to move items 4C and 4D to immediately follow Program of Studies.

3. Public Comment – Chair Fasihuddin asked for any public comment. She noted that no one raised a hand requesting to make a statement or comment.

4. Presentations/Discussion Items

- a) Presentation of HA 2023-2024 Program of Studies – Hopkins Academy Principal April Camuso presented changes to the Hopkins Program of Studies. She stated that language in regard to Advanced Placement (AP) requirements has changed in that achieving a certain grade level in a prerequisite course for taking AP courses has changed from “required” to “recommended.” Also, students who are in an AP class will be required to take the AP exam for that class. Science requirements have changed to four courses (20 credits) in order to graduate. This could include an elective science class. Two new courses added to the curriculum include Spanish for Service Learning and Ethics. Information under the Program of Studies seeks to illustrate the various programs available at Hopkins Academy which include workforce education, innovation, college and the addition of the future educators’ program.

There is also a change to language in the Middle School Retention Policy. The policy now references that a middle school student who fails a core course will have a summer work requirement and that a plan will be developed by the middle school team leader, principal, and guidance counselor.

Action: Approval of HA 2023-2024 Program of Studies as presented:

Motion: Pipczynski Second: Phifer Vote: 5-0-0

- b) Public Hearing FY24 Budget – A. McKenzie explained that there is no change to the budget since presented at January 2023 meeting of the Hadley School Committee. She summarized that the School Department is asking the Town for an increase in local contribution of 2%, with a total budget increase since last fiscal year of 1.66%. The budget was submitted to the Town’s Finance Committee and was well received, the next step is for the Town Select Board to review and approve the budget. A. McKenzie thanked the Town for its ongoing support and noted that this hearing was posted as required by law to notify the public of that this budget hearing was taking place.

Action: Approval of FY24 School Budget as presented:

Motion: Pipczynski Second: Phifer Vote: 5-0-0

- c) Disposition of Assets - Donation of Table in HA Staff Lounge – A. McKenzie explained that this table is no longer in use and the school would like to donate it to a person who wants to refurbish it.

Action: Approve donation the table from the Hopkins Academy Staff Lounge:

Motion: Pipczynski Second: Percy Vote: 5-0-0

- d) Disposition of Assets 35 Surplus American Vision Textbooks – A. McKenzie explained that these books are no longer in use, they will be recycled to the extent possible.

Action: Approve disposing (via recycling when possible) of American Vision Textbooks

Motion: Phifer Second: Pipczynski Vote: 5-0-0

- e) Amendment to Non-Union Employee Handbook

- I. A. McKenzie requested that the School Committee consider approving paid holidays of Presidents Day and Patriots Day for Non-Union HPS employees. These holidays are recognized for contracted Unit A and D employees.

Action: Approve paid holidays of Presidents and Patriots Day for HPS non-union employees

Motion: Pipczynski Second: Phifer Vote: 5-0-0

- II. Religious Observances - HEA benefit of two days of religious observance to be included in non-union employee handbook. – A. McKenzie asked the school committee to consider extending this benefit to nonunion employees so there is consistency across the board with HPS employees – the same conditions as with Unit A and Unit D employees for requesting religious holidays apply.

Action: Approve paid holidays of religious observance for HPS non-union employees

Motion: Pipczynski Second: Percy Vote: 5-0-0

- f) Increase in [Substitute Rate](#) – A. McKenzie explained that the current per diem rate for substitute teachers is low, and asked that the School Committee consider an increase in the per diem rate from \$100 to \$130 for a certified substitute, and from \$95 to \$115 for a non-certified substitute. Per diem rates from other districts were provided for comparison.

Action: Approve increasing per diem pay rate for certified substitute teachers to \$130 and non-certified substitutes to \$115.00.

Motion: Pipczynski Second: Phifer Vote: 5-0-0

- g) [Panorama Student Survey Communication and Questions](#) – A. McKenzie explained that a draft of the survey was developed by Safe School Specialist Sara Jaber and herself, was reviewed with student representatives and sent out well in advance to parents explaining the intent of the survey and included a copy of the questions. A. McKenzie opened it up to the school committee again for review and to answer any questions or concerns.

Discussion ensued, with Ms. Pipczynski stating that she was concerned about possible unintended consequences of some of the questions, and asked if there was a better way to ask some of the questions. She asked what we are looking to gain and felt that some students may not feel comfortable answering some of the questions.

Mr. Donta-Venman stated that his understanding from Ms. Jaber is that the results of the survey would be reviewed by her and that she would use the results as a tool to identify where there may be problems and use that information to help educate staff in areas that make students uncomfortable. Ms. Brugger stated that her understanding is that the survey would serve as a datapoint tool for tracking how the school is diverse, equitable and inclusive.

Mr. Phifer asked what HPS is going to do with the data. A. McKenzie explained that the intent is to raise awareness of people's experiences, both positive and negative, and understanding school

climate - we cannot address what we don't know. The ultimate goal is to build trust and the end goal is for people to feel comfortable in voicing any concerns they may have.

Action items going forward are for A. McKenzie to reach out to other districts and other Panorama clients to inquire about any negative outcomes or consequences that they might have experienced in their roll out. She will also explore including an open response section to multiple choice questions. Ms. Pipczynski will meet with Dr. McKenzie to identify specific questions of concerns.

5. Student Representative Report

- i. Grant Donta-Venman (HA Grade 10)
 - a) Student Review of Survey Items – G. Donta-Venman stated that his understanding is that the survey is confidential, and that survey questions are optional, it is okay to skip a question for any reason. He also reported P. Cruz's comments regarding her opinion that the survey is valuable in that it will help gauge how well represented people throughout the system feel.
 - b) Drama Club Upcoming Performance - standing in for student representative Cruz, Donta-Venman reported that due to technical issues the school play was rescheduled for the weekend of March 31.

6. Business Manager Reports – Chair Fasihuddin stated that information is contained in the links below, but there is no formal presentation at this meeting. Full presentation will be at the April School Committee meeting.

- a. [Expense](#)
- b. [Revolving](#)
- c. [Grants](#)

7. School Committee Reports/Discussion

- a) Finance – Fasihuddin – nothing new to report.
- b) CES – Brugger – next meeting scheduled for later in the week.
- c) Policy – Percy – nothing new to report.
- d) Fields – Phifer – the bids for the second phase of the fields are going out in April.
- e) Capital – Pipczynski – nothing new to report.

8. Announcements

- a) Select Board Liaison - Joyce Chunglo stated that the Town budget is in process.
- b) School Committee Member Updates – Town elections are coming up with two seats on School Committee. H. Fasihuddin reported that Hadley Learns has an event and discussion coming up on April 13 – more information is available on hadleylearns.com. C. Pipczynski expressed her condolences for the recent school shootings in Nashville, TN.
- c) Upcoming Events HPS Calendar – A. McKenzie stated that the last day of school is now scheduled for June 21, 2023.

9. Action Items

- a) Approval of [Minutes February 27, 2023](#)

Action: Approve February 27, 2023 meeting minutes as presented:

Motion: Percy Second: Phifer Vote: 5-0-0

- b) Approval of Warrants February 2023

Action: Approve Warrants February 2023 as presented:

Motion: Phifer Second: Vote: 5-0-0

10. Next Meeting Dates

Policy Subcommittee - April 24, 2023 @ 4:30 pm

Regular School Committee - April 24, 2023 @ 5:30 pm

11. Executive Session – No Executive Session

12. Adjourn Regular Meeting – 6:54pm

Motion: Pipczynski

Second: Phifer

Vote: 5-0-0