

**HADLEY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS 01035  
Minutes January 27, 2020  
125 Russell Street, Hadley, MA 01035 5:30 pm**

**Call to Order**

On motion made by Phifer and seconded by Brugger, the meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm by Klesch, with a vote of 4-0-0. Present: Klesch, Fasihuddin, Phifer, Brugger McKenzie, Desjardins. Absent: Shannon

**Adjustments to the Agenda**

There were no adjustments to the agenda.

**Presentations/Discussion Items**

**Presentation of Service Learning Trip Squads Abroad 5:35 pm**

Ms. Fitzgibbons was present to review the itinerary of the trip with the committee. She had provided detailed informational documents to the members prior to the meeting. Fitzgibbons estimated the cost of the 2020 trip to Costa Rica for grades 9-12 to take place February 17-24 at \$1800 per student inclusive of the flight costs. She said that they are considering pursuing global STEM activities on the trip. On motion made by Fasihuddin and seconded by Phifer, the committee voted 4-0-0 to approve the *Squad Abroad* trip for February 2020.

**Nature's Classroom and Boston Field Trips 5:45 pm**

Ms. Duncan was present to review details of the Trip. She provided detailed information and explanation of connections to the curriculum for the seventh grade Nature's Classroom trip from June 1-3, 2020 to Wakefield Rhode Island. This included an estimated cost per pupil (based on 40 students participating) of \$366.00. Fasihuddin said that it was a wonderful experience but that she had received feedback from students that they were surprised that there were religious symbols at the camp. Duncan responded that all the sites were similar in that respect. Fasihuddin did not object, but suggested that the students be made aware of what to expect to see on the trip. Klesch added that she appreciated the significant connections to the curriculum and said that this is a tradition that students look forward to. With no further questions, Phifer made a motion to approve the nature's Classroom trip for 2020. Fasihuddin seconded and the motion passed 4-0-0.

**Boston Trip- Grade 8**

Mr. Hemingway and Ms. Barba were present to provide details about the Grade 8 trip to Boston June 4-5 with estimated cost per student depending on what hotel accommodations were selected. A daily itinerary and curriculum connections were outlined in the documents provided to the committee members prior to the meeting. Ms. Barba said that the students may have the opportunity to meet with their legislators or their staff. There was a question from a committee

member if the 8<sup>th</sup> grade had gone to Boston in the past. Ms. Duncan said that they had gone to New York for the past few years but were going back to Boston this year. On motion made by Phifer and seconded by Brugger, the committee voted 4-0-0 to approve the trip.

### **Student Presentation GSA Name Change**

Present to represent the GSA were Ada Bouthet, Eli Rousseau, and Kyle Uchneat. They informed the School Committee that they wished to change the GSA from Gay-Straight Alliance to Gender-Sexuality Alliance because they feel it is more inclusive. McKenzie said that there was no need for approval by the school committee but that the members are pleased to hear about the group and what students were thinking. She thanked them for coming to the meeting and sharing their thoughts. Committee members also thanked the students and commended them for their insight and for making everyone feel welcome and included.

### **Hartsbrook School Approval 5:55 pm**

McKenzie said that this is an annual approval for the private school operation of Hartsbrook School in Hadley. McKenzie added that she reviewed all the required documentation from the school as well as completed a site visit before bringing the approval proposal forward to the committee. Klesch asked if there had been any change since they last approved the operation of Hartsbrook School. McKenzie responded that there had been no significant changes to the curriculum or staffing over the past year. Fasihuddin made a motion to approve the operation of Hartsbrook School for the 2019-2020 school year. Seconded by Phifer, the committee voted 4-0-0 in favor of approval.

### **Grants Update**

McKenzie provided the committee with a spreadsheet of all grants (submitted and in process) and their status as to received, declined, waiting to hear, etc., and grant amounts. In regards to the Pathways grant, Phifer asked since HA students already have access to college courses, how does the grant change that? McKenzie responded that there may some funding attached to the program next year. McKenzie said that although some college courses are available free of charge, there are some that are not. For students gaining early college designation, this would allow them to earn 12 college credits free of charge prior to entering college and that there will now be a record of college credits on high school diplomas.

McKenzie said HPS did not get the safety and security federal grant she was hoping for but said there is another grant available that may be more favorable as a regional effort with other school districts. Klesch informed fellow members that she had recently attended an All- boards meeting at which she spoke about accomplishments and HPS grants, including the fact that in 2019, HPS submitted a total of 24 competitive grants of which only 3 were not successful. This is a 75% approval rating. Klesch summarized all of the other HPS achievements and program innovations and said the information was well received by the Board. Klesch went on to inform the committee about the main points of interest each Board/ committee spoke about at the All Boards meeting. The committee thanked Klesch for sharing the information.

### **MSBA response and next steps**

McKenzie informed the committee that their proposal had not been accepted. She added that she and Desjardins spoke directly with MSBA representatives to get feedback and suggestions for next year's application.

### **Increase in Substitute Teacher Rate 6:00 pm**

McKenzie informed the committee that our substitute rates are not competitive and need to be increased to meet the minimum wage law. She provided a comparison report on substitute teacher daily rates in several other school districts. Klesch asked if McKenzie wanted 2 different rates for certified teachers and non-certified teachers. McKenzie said yes and made her recommendation for the rates. Phifer asked how much is spent annually for substitute teachers. Desjardins responded with an approximate figure of \$65,000. McKenzie informed the committee that some days subs were needed for professional development or data days, etc. The committee was interested in how the new sub rate would impact the total budget. Klesch suggested that the committee consider an increase of \$80/ \$85 per day and revisit it again next year if needed. Phifer made a motion to increase the substitute teacher rate to \$80/ day for non-certified individuals and \$85/ day for certified individuals. With a second by Fasihuddin, the committee voted 4-0-0 to approve the motion.

### **Approval for participation in School Choice 6:05 pm**

McKenzie told the committee that they needed to approve School Choice participation each year and was looking for a decision on School Choice participation for FY21. On motion made by Fasihuddin and seconded by Brugger, the committee voted to approve School choice participation for FY21.

### **FY21 Budget Timeline and Preliminary Discussion**

McKenzie distributed budget information to the members and stressed the fact that this is a preliminary Budget document. She reviewed each item. There is an expected increase in Circuit Breaker funding. She mentioned the possible need to use school choice funding for some of the Title programs. She also mentioned that the pre-school grant is no longer available. Due to so many unknowns the prepared document of revenues and expenses is not balanced and would require an increase in revenues to meet a 5% increase in expenses. She mentioned that district administration increases took place after the FY20 budget was submitted so the increases shown reflect 2 years of increases in that line item. McKenzie said there is an anticipated significant increase in special education costs, including tuitions. McKenzie mentioned areas where decreases were made and where increases were made, explaining the rationale behind each. As the preliminary budget stands now, the expense side reflects a 4.31% increase. McKenzie said she needs to provide the Town with a figure and is seeking recommendation from the school committee as to how they would like her to proceed with that. She said that she had asked the Town Administrator if the Finance Committee had a target figure for percentage increase and the response was level services. Klesch agreed that it is difficult to come up with a figure as there are so

many “ifs” and things may change. McKenzie said that she and Desjardins have had some preliminary thoughts as to how the budget could be adjusted if needed, but that it was still too early to provide specific scenarios. Brugger said that perhaps the committee should present the total increase needed. Klesch said that it may be better to be transparent about what things look like now and that adjustments would have been made if the local contribution does not meet the needs of level services budget. Klesch inquired if there was an opportunity to share bookkeeping services with the town. Desjardins responded that it was not an opportune time for consideration of that option as the town was experiencing some changes in the accounting office. Further discussion took place regarding options of leaving unfilled positions unfilled until more definitive expenditures are determined.

#### **FY2020-2021 School Calendar – 6:15 pm**

The Committee was presented with three choices of calendars that provided different options for curriculum days and half days for teacher grade reporting. After consideration for families and teachers, the committee approved Calendar B, voting 4-0-0 on motion by Brugger and second by Phifer.

#### **Movement HH Funds into revolving account for Athletic Fields – 6:20 pm**

Desjardins reported on the progress of the Athletic Fields Revolving Account. Desjardins was informed that there was no need for a Town Meeting vote to create the account because the funds were gifted. He said he will meet with the Town Administrator, Town Accountant, and Treasurer and the account will be created and funds moved over to it. Desjardins said that he thinks the project will go out to bid soon and he anticipates the opening around February 25<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Developing Norms as a Committee – 6:25 pm**

Klesch mentioned that there are 2 positions open for election to the School Committee. Shannon will not run again; Brugger will run again. Klesch stated that this committee worked very well together and was very productive. McKenzie referred to a document she provided for the committee *Reflecting on Norms and Values* which outline the committee’s guiding principles and beliefs. Klesch suggested that the committee consider this as a first reading of the document as is the process for approval of district policies.

#### **Second Reading of Policies – 6:30 pm**

On motion made by Phifer and seconded by Fasihuddin, the Committee voted to approve the second reading and adoption of the policies as listed below:

- IHB Special Instructional programs and Accommodations
- IHBA Programs for Students with Disabilities
- IHBA-R District Curriculum Accommodations Procedures
- IHBAA Observations of Special Education Programs
- IHBA-E DCAP Accommodation Plan

- IHBB Preschool Program
- IHBB-R Preschool Admission Procedure
- IHBD Title I Supplement
- IHBD-R Title I Parental Involvement
- IHBEA English Language Learners

### **Public Comment Period**

There were no members of the public present for comment.

### **Personnel Report**

McKenzie was pleased to report to the committee that she hired a new School Adjustment Counselor, who was already working in the position.

### **Business Manager Report- 6:45 pm**

- a. Expense Report – Desjardins informed the committee members that the report provided reflected through the end of the calendar year. He added that he had made some transfers from school choice and from grants. He pointed out that there were some overages in the Special Education tuition account, which will be transferred to circuit breaker.
- b. Grant Report- Desjardins said that the grants report would be expanded as additional approved grant funding is received. McKenzie summarized some of the individual grant award totals in response to a question from Klesch.
- c. Revolving Accounts –Desjardins informed the committee that the negative balance for the lunch program was \$5,720.00. He added that the law requires that the district make the food services program balance so money had to be transferred from School Choice. He commended the amount of time and effort the Food Services Director puts in to secure unpaid balances.
- d. Capital Plan- Desjardins said that since the schools were not successful in getting funding for the locker room remodel, technology upgrades or new school bus, he wanted to know how the committee wanted to move forward with the Capital Plan.  
 Phifer suggested that the Tech upgrades were essential and sensed from the finance Committee that we could go back and request funding for one year as opposed to the two year plan originally proposed. Phifer asked if the bus request would have to be in the form of an override if it went before the town again. McKenzie responded that it probably would. She added that Desjardins had done some research on renting a bus when needed. McKenzie said the committee should decide if they were going to go back and request tech upgrades, she has to submit warrant articles with her budget in February. Further discussion as to the timing of requests, priority of requests and public awareness of the last town wide vote in relation to turn out.  
 McKenzie spoke to the bus issue saying there were unknowns in regards to an ongoing business relationship with Five Star and how busing needs would be impacted by the Start Time Committee findings. Klesch expressed that she felt the priority should be for direct

services to students, such as the technology upgrades. McKenzie said it would be helpful to get some input from the town in regards to other override proposals and go from there to see about putting an article in for one year of tech upgrades.

#### **School Committee Reports/Discussion 7:00 pm**

Policy – The committee voted on second readings for a group of policies and is slated to meet again on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Start Time Task Force- Brugger reported the committee members were reviewing and giving feedback on start time transportation. She said the committee was considering focus groups for feedback.

McKenzie said she had been in contact with CES regarding management of surveys and feedback.

Finance/TriBoard – Klesch said she had nothing to report since the last TRiBoard meeting and asked McKenzie if the next meeting had been scheduled. McKenzie said that there was an upcoming Finance Committee meeting.

CES – Fasihuddin- There is an upcoming CES meeting and she will provide a report.

#### **Action Items- 7:10 pm**

- a. Approval of Service Learning Trip- Motion: Fasihuddin; second: Phifer; vote: 4-0-4.
- b. Approval of Nature's Classroom Trip- Motion: Phifer; Second: Fasihuddin; Vote: 4-0-0.
- c. Approval of Grade 8 Boston Trip- Motion: Phifer; Second: Brugger; Vote: 4-0-0.
- d. Approval of Hartsbrook School for Private School Operation- Motion: Fasihuddin; Second: Phifer; vote: 4-0-0.
- e. Approval of increase in Substitute Rate- Motion: Phifer; Second Fasihuddin; Vote: 4-0-0.
- f. Approval of School Choice Participation- Motion: Fasihuddin; Second: Brugger; Vote: 4-0-0.
- g. Approval of Second Reading of Policies- Motion Phifer; Second: Fasihuddin; Vote: 4-0-0
- h. Approval of AP Warrants Submitted November 2019 – Motion: Phifer; Second: Brugger; Vote: 3-0-1.
- i. Approval of Warrants Submitted November 2019 Motion: Fasihuddin; Second: Phifer; Vote: 4-0-0.
- j. Approval of AP Warrants Submitted December 2019 – Motion: Fasihuddin; Second: Phifer; Vote: 3-0-1.
- k. Approval of Warrants Submitted December 2019 Motion: Fasihuddin; Second: Phifer; Vote: 4-0-0.
- l. Approval of November, 2019 minutes – Motion: Fasihuddin; Second: Phifer; Vote: 4-0-0.

#### **Next Regular Meeting Date**

March 2, 2020

#### **Adjournment**

On motion made by Phifer, seconded by Fasihuddin, and unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 7:12 pm