

**HADLEY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS 01035**

Minutes February 22, 2016 Hopkins Academy Music Room

5:30 PM

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.

Call to Order/Members Present

Dunlavy called the meeting order at 5:30 PM. The following members were present: Phifer, Grant and Dunlavy. Fasihuddin entered the meeting at 5:35 PM. Student Representative Jennie Moss was present.

Record of Votes

- *Approval of January 25, 2016 minutes – Phifer moves to approve minutes of January 25, 2016 School Committee meeting. Grant seconds. Vote 4-0-0.*
- *Approval of 2016-2017 Hadley Public Schools Calendar – Fasihuddin moves to approve 2016-2017 calendar. Grant seconds. Vote 4-0-0.*
- *Approval of Hopkins Academy Program of Studies 2016-2017 – Grant moves to approve the Hopkins Academy Program of Studies as presented. Phifer seconds. Vote 4-0-0.*
- *Approval to use school choice funds – Fasihuddin moves to move \$520,000 of expenses from the FY16 operating budget to the school choice account. Grant seconds. Vote 4-0-0.*
- *Declaration of surplus – Grant moves to designate the list of library and media materials submitted by Ms. Bohall as surplus. Fasihuddin seconds. Vote 4-0-0.*
- *Adjournment of regular meeting – Fasihuddin moves to adjourn at 7:30 pm. Phifer seconds. Vote 4-0-0.*

Decisions/Actions

- Adjustments to the agenda included: change in order of agenda items – SEPAC presentation to follow calendar discussion; school committee to discuss moving expenses from operating budget to school choice account.
- Committee members agreed to participate in SEPAC task force.

Summary of Discussion on Each Subject Presented to Committee for Consideration

Adjustments to the Agenda

Dunlavy stated the order of the agenda would change. SEPAC presentation would occur when all SEPAC members arrived.

Public Comment Period

There were no comments from the public.

Hopkins Academy Program of Studies 2016-2017

Beck presented proposed changes to the HA Program of Studies for 2016-2017. Full course load is 35 credits in new schedule – previously 40. Course levels were changed from Level I, II, Honors and Advanced Placement to Honors, College Prep and Advanced Placement. Some courses are not assigned any level; these courses do not factor into a student's GPA. Changes do not affect course weighting and GPA calculations. Changes only affect course descriptions. Beck reviewed changes to HA middle school science courses in grade 7 and grade 8. Dunlavy asked about Course 270- 7th Grade Systems and Cycles. Beck and McKenzie explained changes to the science standards place greater emphasis on scientific practices and scientific thinking. Courses are designed to spiral content and allow students several opportunities to develop scientific thinking. Beck reviewed all changes included in school committee handouts. Dunlavy asked how new schedule is going at HA. Beck deferred to student

representative Moss. Moss explained that although she was initially opposed to the schedule she is very happy with it. She particularly likes the fact that every course is offered at different times during the schedule rotation.

2016-2017 District Calendar

McKenzie presented the 2016-2017 district calendar for school committee approval. McKenzie stated the calendar had been reviewed by administration and the HEA president. Labor recommended having the Wednesday before Thanksgiving as a school holiday and the Friday before December break. Phifer expressed concern that some parents may have difficulties arranging for childcare. McKenzie explained other districts have also made these days school holidays due to low attendance on half days before school vacation. Dunlavy asked McKenzie to track attendance in 2016-2017 with the change and see if there are any differences from 2015-2016 to 2016-2017.

Hadley Special Education Parent Advisory Council Report

SEPAC members Jennifer Loebel, Tara Brugger, Jonah Brugger, Michelle Richotte, and Geri Labay presented findings from the SEPAC 2016 district-wide parent survey. Presenters reviewed all survey subcommittee members, thanked the administration and Heather Klesch for their support in designing and distributing the survey, reviewed response rates and highlighted key themes and next steps. Themes from the survey included: satisfaction with Title I services, belief that curriculum meets the needs of the majority of students, high levels of student happiness in district and parents of students with special needs have an understanding of their rights. Presenters highlighted parent concerns that emerged from the survey including: too much emphasis on MCAS preparation, communication between home and school, older students reporting feeling bored, insufficient resources, insufficient number of service providers, and perception that timelines were not consistently met. Presenters proposed forming a task force comprised of school committee representation, SEPAC, and special education staff. The task force would present findings to school committee no later than April 2016. Dunlavy commented on the quality of the survey and the report. Dunlavy suggested SEPAC submit a schedule of meeting dates and an available school committee member could attend. Grant stated she thought the task force was a great idea but cautioned against recommending changes that would affect the FY17 budget since budget development is well underway and the presentation to the town select board will occur in early March. Fasihuddin suggested the task force should not back off of its date because there may be opportunities to put some recommendations in place. Phifer asked SEPAC members if they had a vision of what success would look like. SEPAC member Loebel indicated a successful approach would be one in which task force members had the tools and information to dig deeper into the data and make recommendations that would result in positive change. Assistant Superintendent Bell presented data on disability prevalence and the average hours of service for different disability types. Bell highlighted how an increase in the number of students with disabilities requiring more intensive and frequent services has resulted in unforeseen demand on the system even though the number of students on IEPs has not increased dramatically. Bell presented data on the district meeting special education timelines. The district currently meets its timelines in 88.5% of all cases per DESE. Phifer indicated he would attend the next SEPAC meeting on March 3, 2016 at 6:30.

District Strategy Progress Report

McKenzie presented the District Strategy Progress Report enclosed in the packet. There were no questions.

Wellness and Mental Health Grant Projects

McKenzie read portions of a letter from nurse Kirsten Kennedy (HES) to the School Committee regarding designating May *All Families are Special* month at HES. Students will contribute art, poetry, and essays to a school-wide publication on what makes every family special. McKenzie indicated HA will begin optional mindfulness and yoga for students in the morning as part of its mental health and wellness activities.

Personnel Report

McKenzie presented personnel report enclosed in packet.

Expense Report

Desjardins reviewed the expense report. Desjardins stated he had no concerns but noted he has been transferring funds as needed between lines to ensure all lines remain in the positive. Desjardins indicated there had been several unanticipated building maintenance expenses this year. Desjardins also noted expenses had not yet been transferred from the operating budget to the school choice fund as this required School Committee approval. Dunlavy entertained a motion to transfer expenses as requested by Desjardins.

Revolving Accounts

Desjardins reviewed the revolving account report. Desjardins stated he had contacted town hall about the significant fluctuation in the lunch revolving account.

Grant Report

Desjardins presented the grant report enclosed in the packet.

FY17 Draft Budget Presentation for March 2, 2016 Presentation to Select board

Desjardins, McKenzie, and Dunlavy presented data on school choice enrollment trends, changes in staffing, expenditures, out of district tuition costs, grant funds, projections for the special education reserve fund, and possible budget reductions. A level programming/services budget results in a 5.86% increase in the total operating budget from FY16 to FY17 and a 5.76% increase in local contribution. Dunlavy indicated that the town had made it clear that significant increases in the school department budget from year to year are unsustainable. Grant indicated town revenues are projected to increase by slightly over 4%. Dunlavy pointed out that a level services budget requires an increase that exceeds anticipated increases in town revenues. Committee members discussed possible reductions to the FY17 budget which would result in a reduction of services. Committee members also discussed using additional school choice funds to offset the increase in local contribution. Dunlavy pointed out that this strategy is time limited and cautioned against using reserves for operating costs. Ms. Bell commented that the reductions seemed heavily weighted toward instructional support services and suggested looking at other cost centers closely. Phifer asked committee members what their concerns were about presenting a level services budget as the town requested. Grant raised the issue of the reputation of the school department. Fasihuddin expressed concern over the impact on other town departments and shared her experience as a School Committee member during contentious budget years. Dunlavy recommended adding slides from the SEPAC presentation to illustrate the fact that parents are interested in increasing services not decreasing services. Grant suggested using only one slide from the SEPAC presentation. Phifer suggested presenting the level service request to the select board and listening to the response. Dunlavy agreed with presenting a level service budget but also suggested stating the school department's willingness to match any increase to the town's projected growth by reducing the budget/programming and/or increasing the amount of school choice funds applied to the operating budget.

Building and Grounds Subcommittee

Phifer reported on a community information meeting on the fields' project that occurred in February. Peter Wells from Berkshire Design attended the meeting and provided ideas for an initial phase of the project. School Committee members reviewed updated Phase I costs submitted by Berkshire Design. Committee members discussed the town capital planning process. Dunlavy indicated she and Phifer would participate in a meeting with David Nixon, a member of the CPA committee and a member of the select board to discuss how to integrate the school department's capital plan into a town wide capital plan. Committee members reviewed the most recent capital plan for the schools and did not make any revisions. Dunlavy and Phifer will update the entire committee in March regarding the outcome of the meeting with town representatives.

Library Surplus

McKenzie presented the most recent list of library and media materials Ms. Bohall recommends be declared as surplus.

Beck Wins Award From NEASC

McKenzie read a letter from NEASC recognizing Brian Beck for receiving the Jacob Ludes III Leadership Award.

List of Documents and Exhibits Used at Meeting

- Agenda February 22, 2016
- January 25, 2016 School Committee Minutes
- Hopkins Academy Program of Studies 2016-2017
- Slide Presentation SEPAC
- SEPAC Report on 2016 District-Wide Parent Survey
- Disability Incidence Data (Handouts from Pat Bell)
- 2016-2017 Hadley Public Schools Calendar
- Progress Report District Strategy
- Letter to School Committee from Kirsten Kennedy (nurse HES)
- FY17 Budget Presentation Slides for March 2, 2016 Select Board Meeting
- FY16 Choice/Charter/Special Education/Vocational Education Tuition Data
- Personnel Report 2/22/2016
- Expense Report 2/18/2016
- Grant Allocations for FY16 dated 2/17/2016
- Revolving Account Report
- 5 Year Capital Plan and Timeline
- List of Library Surplus
- Berkshire Design Phase I Athletic Fields
- Letter from NEASC

Names of Remote Participants

No members participated remotely.

Next Regular Meeting Dates

March 28, 2016 at 5:30

Adjournment _____ 7:30 _____ PM