

**HADLEY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS 01035
February 5, 2015**

6:00 PM

Music Room Hopkins Academy

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Linda Dunlavy called meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

PRESENT: Ms. Linda Dunlavy, Chair
Members: Ms. Humera Fasihuddin, Ms. Robie Grant

OTHERS: Anne McKenzie, Superintendent; Christopher Desjardins, Business Manager

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION: (Grant/Fasihuddin) to go into Executive Session to conduct strategy session in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel and to conduct collective bargaining sessions and to reconvene in open session. Roll call vote: Fasihuddin – Yes; Grant-Yes.

Heather Klesch entered Executive Session at 6:05.

Additional attendees present for the regular school committee meeting: Brian Beck, Patricia Bell, Susan Duncan, Connie Douglas, Jeff Udall, and April Camuso.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Dunlavy entertained a motion to approve the minutes of December 22, 2014. Klesch moves to approve. Grant seconds. Minutes of December 22, 2014 approved 4-0-0.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA – McKenzie requests that after presentations the business manager present his report, followed by the leadership team. The student representative was not present; therefore she would not report. McKenzie indicated that there would be two additional items for school committee deliberations: developing a proposal for school business services and a possible overseas field trip.

PUBLIC COMMENT – There were no requests for public comment.

PRESENTATIONS – Ms. Duncan presented the Boston Field Trip which will take place May 26-27, 2015. This trip is similar to what Ms. Duncan has led in the past. Students will do science and math activities at the Boston Museum and attend an IMAX presentation. The second day students will walk the Freedom Trail. Ms. Duncan reviewed curriculum connections with school committee. Dunlavy asked if the trip combines the May and October trip of years past. Duncan confirmed. Grant asked if there would be fundraising for the trip and if the fundraising would reduce the cost. Duncan explained the students would do a popcorn fundraiser. Funds raised would then reduce the cost of the final payment for the trip.

MOTION: (Fasihuddin/Klesch) to approve HA field trip to Boston as presented

VOTE: 4-0-0; Unanimous

Ms. Camuso reviewed a proposal for an EF Student Leadership Tour that includes a two day summit with a specific focus. Ms. Camuso is interested in the Student Leadership Tour that focuses on Education as a Human Right. The trip begins with the summit at the Hague and then proceeds to various European cities. The trip is approximately \$5,000 which is more costly than other trips. Students who would be eligible for the trip are current freshmen and sophomores. McKenzie asked about opening the trip to students from other districts. Ms. Camuso is leaning toward keeping the trip limited to HA students. McKenzie reviewed options: open trip to other students (including college students) – Attorney Duprere expressed concerns about trips for mixed age students and indicated that if the trip were opened up then it is no longer a Hadley trip and not covered by our insurance. This option means it is an EF trip not a Hadley trip and Ms. Camuso cannot advertise the trip. If it is a Hadley trip the numbers will be lower but Ms. Camuso can advertise. Grant indicated she was concerned about the cost and the short time frame for families to raise money. Klesch asked how many students are needed. Camuso indicated that the number of attendees does not impact cost. Dunlavy asked if there school committee could approve the trip and have Camuso return and present other options if only a few students expressed an interest. Grant expressed concern over the cost of the trip and suggested surveying students to get a sense of interest. Klesch asked if we know about student interest currently. Camuso had not asked any students about the trip. Dunlavy asked about fundraising. Camuso indicated that fundraising for these trips does not substantially offset cost. Grant would feel more comfortable with some gage of interest and asked if we could do this. McKenzie said Camuso can survey students to get a sense of interest. Dunlavy asked the Committee if they would like to wait a month, survey student interest and return. Fasihuddin asked if Camuso could survey parent interest. Camuso will survey students and parents and bring information back to school committee.

PUBLIC COMMENT –There were no comments from the public.

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS –

Business and Finance-

Expense Report - Desjardins reviewed expense report (see handout). Desjardins reported things are looking good. District will be encumbering payroll in upcoming week so those will show on next month's report. Desjardins pointed out that he will be doing line item transfers to bring all lines to the positive. All transfers are within similar accounts so they do not require school committee approval. The committee should see these on the February expense report.

MOTION: (Grant/Klesch) to use \$500,000 of choice funds for FY15 salaries and \$30,000 to be applied to FY15 special education tuition payments.

VOTE: 4-0-0; Unanimous

Revolving Accounts – Desjardins reviewed all revolving accounts (see handout). School committee will see this report monthly. Desjardins reported school lunch account is still in the negative but in slightly

better shape. We should anticipate increases in athletic revolving and decreases in preschool revolving. Athletics will collect more gate money and expenses charged to the preschool revolving will be charged to the account as they are incurred. Dunlavy asked about the change in the school lunch account.

Desjardins indicated that a negative balance had been paid. Desjardins reported that reminder emails about school lunch accounts will begin going out automatically and should help reduce the number of delinquent accounts. Dunlavy asked if an account ends in the positive could a parent elect to have the school lunch program keep it. Desjardins said parents may do that if they choose.

Grant Report- Desjardins reviewed the grant report (see handout). Desjardins indicated that it is important to spend down grants as soon as possible. Circuit Breaker and Title I can be carried over. Desjardins does not project carryover of Title I funds.

School Choice Projection- Desjardins reviewed school choice projections (see handout). Report shows what we received in FY15 increased slightly. District projected to have \$602,000 at end of FY15. He indicated it is important to have a cushion in the event of unforeseen expenses.

Capital Plan – Desjardins is still awaiting prices on a few items on the capital plan. As he receives this information, he will provide it to the committee.

Rationale for Vehicle Replacement – Desjardins has not spoken with town mechanic. Ms. Hopf indicated that the buses we want to replace are 7 and 8 years old and have over 100,000 miles.

Leadership Team Reports –

Mr. Beck announced HA received preliminary approval from Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Conference for a cross country team at HA pending budget approval. The team will be eligible for league meets in two years. Mr. Beck thanked Erick Sudnick for the work he did to make this happen. Klesch asked about the grades that will participate in the team. Mr. Beck indicated it is open to grades 7-12. Mr. Beck reviewed the status of evaluating the HA schedule. The faculty began reviewing schedules last school year. The faculty brainstormed what they like about the current schedule, what they do not like, and what they would like to see. At the end of last school year, Mr. Burns took the feedback from faculty (having courses rotate, reducing course loads for students and teachers, having period lengths appropriate for subjects like science). Mr. Beck applauded Mr. Burns efforts to integrate faculty input into a possible schedule. Mr. Beck would like 80% of the staff in favor of the schedule before a new schedule is approved. Mr. Beck indicated that Mr. Burns and Ms. McKenzie met with a student focus group to get their input and hear their concerns about proposed schedule changes. Beck indicated that if HA proceeds with a schedule change faculty will work with students. Dunlavy asked if the proposed changes would take effect in September 2015. Beck stated that was the goal but that HA would be prepared for two scenarios, moving forward with a new schedule or maintaining the existing schedule. Beck thanked Janet Slokum for her contributions to the conversation. Grant asked for further explanation of how the proposed changes would affect time on learning. Beck explained that if you multiply the number of minutes high school students spend in each course would increase per course by a couple of hours annually. Klesch asked if Beck was examining different start times for high school. Beck stated that is not a part of the current conversation.

Hadley Elementary School – Mr. Udall provided an update on NAEYC accreditation and implementation of Teaching Strategies Gold. HES has implemented TS Gold in one classroom with full implementation underway. HES has begun evidence collection for NAEYC accreditation. The review team will examine

evidence and conduct an on-site review. Udall updated the school committee on the work of a teacher led committee to evaluate moving to a trimester report card instead of quarterly report cards. Udall explained the rationale for moving to a trimester model. The trimester model allows teachers to have more time to assess student learning and performance (60 days). The team is looking at standards-based report cards and has collected examples from several districts. Each team member will review examples, highlight what they like and reconvene as a team to begin developing a standards based report card. HES will eventually present its recommendations to the school committee once the work is complete. The goal is to create a parent friendly document that is easy to read. Klesch expressed concern that HES would move from reaching out to parents four times per year to three times per year. She asked if there has been any discussion about integrating tools to facilitate more frequent and better communication with parents, like using the Parent Portal or giving parents access to grades online. Udall indicated that these ideas had been a part of the discussion, as well as, possibly adding parent conferences in the spring. Dunlavy asked if there would be a need for changes to the school calendar. Udall does not anticipate the need for that.

Special Education and Student Services – Ms. Bell presented a proposal for a substantially separate classroom for elementary students with significant needs. Bell indicated that the district is on the brink of needing to send students to out of district placements because we do not currently have a program that can meet the needs of these students. Bell, Desjardins, and McKenzie have met to discuss staffing and location of a program. The program would be located in HES. Bell has identified a space. Bell has begun providing training for paraprofessionals who would work with these students. The district will need to hire a highly qualified certified teacher to work with these students. Bell expressed that there is urgency around this. We have two students for whom we need to develop a program this year or seek an out of district placement. McKenzie acknowledged Bell's excellent work in thinking through this. McKenzie indicated that she, Desjardins, and Bell would bring the following information to the next school committee meeting:

- Cost of developing the program (personnel, consult, materials and supplies, program relocation)
- Current tuition expenses for out of district placements
- Cost of approved out of district placements for students if no in district program exists
- Explanation of how keeping children with special needs in the district benefits all students

Grant asked how long the district would need such a program. Bell stated that our students with the greatest needs are very young. Bell believes we have another student who will be entering the district who requires programming that does not currently exist. Bell was clear that it may take time before students who are in out of district placements return but we need to build our capacity first before we can expect this to occur. Bell indicated that she believes we need three children to develop a program. Bell stated that when thinking about long range planning we will have a challenge at HA. We do not have sufficient space to create a program at HA currently. Dunlavy asked if a mid-year hire would be possible. Bell stated that although it would present a challenge she believes we can attract a quality candidate. McKenzie indicated that in addition to presenting a cost benefit analysis of the program she would include the program as an action item at the next meeting. Grant asked if there would be interest

from other districts. Bell stated there would most likely be interest from other districts. Bell's concern is that we will not develop something rapidly. We need a program before May.

Superintendent's Report – McKenzie reviewed the monthly superintendent's report (see attached).

McKenzie reminded the public that we will no longer print handouts but will post school committee handouts on the district website.

Recognition - McKenzie acknowledged Francoise Kayamba for being selected as our next 351 Ambassador. McKenzie has asked the Gazette to interview Francoise and Katie Koch about their experience with 351. McKenzie acknowledged Jeff Mish and Tony Niedbala for the exceptional work they have done during the storms to ensure our buildings and grounds are clear and safe. McKenzie thanked the DPW for communicating effectively with the school department about road conditions. McKenzie acknowledged the work of our Kindergarten staff in preparing for NAEYC and implementing TS Gold.

McKenzie reminded the school committee that next month they will need to do a formative evaluation of the superintendent. McKenzie also acknowledged Ms. Douglas for her work on her district-determined measures which are being used as exemplars by CES in trainings across the Commonwealth.

Police Department Recommendations – McKenzie reviewed the recommendations from Hadley PD after an unannounced lockdown in December. Crisis teams in both buildings have reviewed recommendations and made adjustments to plans.

Personnel Report – McKenzie reviewed the personnel report (included in handouts).

Coalition Statement – McKenzie reviewed coalition statement from Western Massachusetts Education Leaders Conference (included in handouts). The coalition statement questions the pace and cost of current mandates, expressed concerns about PARCC, and the frequency and cost of standardized testing. The coalition has invited school committees who support the work of the group to signal their endorsement by taking a vote of support. Dunlavy suggested that the term unfunded mandate be changed to underfunded mandate.

MOTION: (Fasihuddin/Grant) to support coalition statement.

VOTE: 4-0-0; Unanimous

2015-2016 Calendar – McKenzie met with leadership team and Jack Horrigan and surveyed staff.

McKenzie will review data with leadership team and labor and bring a calendar to school committee in March.

Voluntary Recognition – Information about voluntary recognition of the MTA as the exclusive representative of the paraprofessionals in district is included in the handouts. Dunlavy asked if district could explore having Unit D be a subset of Unit C. McKenzie said she will ask Atty Duprere to follow up with the MTA representative.

MOTION: (Klesch/Grant) to grant recognition of MTA as exclusive representative of paraprofessionals for purpose of negotiations.

VOTE: 4-0-0; Unanimous

Grants-McKenzie informed the committee that the grant we wrote for a substance abuse counselor will not be funded because all funds for this program were eliminated in the 9C cuts. Dunlavy asked about additional 9C cuts. McKenzie said we are monitoring cuts to Circuit Breaker.

Equity – Continuing the Conversation – McKenzie has scheduled a meeting with faculty and HA has opened the Embrace Diversity Club to the entire school. McKenzie complemented the faculty, students, and parents for the feedback the district received in the wake of the article and the thoughtful contributions from all members of the school community. Bell indicated that the next PAC meeting will also discuss the topic of equity.

School Committee Reports-

Policy – Dunlavy reviewed minor changes to policy JP. Dunlavy informed committee members that all changes were recommended by legal counsel and are aligned with the state ethics laws. Dunlavy requested a vote to approve after one reading. Klesch appreciated that the policy did a nice job of addressing class gifts specifically. Dunlavy asked how we are getting information out to parents. Dunlavy suggested perhaps we use Chalk Talk for this in addition to posting all policies on the district website.

MOTION: (Klesch/Grant) to approve policy JP as presented.

VOTE: 4-0-0; Unanimous

CES Update – Grant reported on a recent meeting in which area superintendents and school committee members heard an overview of CES activities.

Tech Task Force – Fasihuddin reported on recent surveys the task force sent to faculty at HES regarding professional development. The technology integration specialist and tech coach at HES will begin scheduling professional development based on survey data. McKenzie reported that HA librarian, Ms. Bohall, will attend the next tech task force meeting to discuss how the task force might support the development of a learning commons model in our school libraries. McKenzie and Bohall will attend a statewide conference March 1st and 2nd to learn more about the idea.

Subcommittee Appointments – Grant is the sole representative on the building and grounds committee until the next election.

Tri Board- Grant reviewed recent Tri Board meeting and concerns that were presented: insufficient revenue to support existing services, policies around various town stabilization funds, looking at benefits, and payroll schedule. Next Tri Board meeting will be February 18, 2015.

Dunlavy requested a final action item to prepare an RFP for business services.

MOTION: (Klesch/Fasihuddin) to prepare RFP for business services and go out to bid for said services.

VOTE: 4-0-0; Unanimous

Next meeting is February 23, 2015. Dunlavy entertained a motion to adjourn. Grant made the motion. Fasihuddin seconds. Meeting adjourned 8:00 pm.