

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

Minutes December 21, 2015 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

Klesch called the meeting order at 5:30 PM. The following members were present: Klesch, Fasihuddin, and Phifer. Grant entered the meeting at 5:34.

Record of Votes

- *Approval of November 23, 2015 minutes – Fasihuddin moves to approve minutes of November 23, 2015 school committee meetings. Phifer seconds. Vote 3-0-0.*
- *Approval of Washington D.C. Field Trip Hopkins Academy October 2016 – Fasihuddin moves to approve Washington D.C. field trip for HA students as presented in School Committee packet. Phifer seconds. Vote 4-0-0.*
- *Award of Bus Bid to Lowest Responsive and Responsible Bidder – Fasihuddin moves to reject bid that provided for a 2016 bus on a 2015 chassis as not meeting bid specifications and to award the bus bid to the next lowest bidder upon clarification that all parts on the bus are 2016. Grant seconds 4-0-0.*
- *Adjournment of regular meeting – Fasihuddin moves to adjourn meeting at 6:32 pm. Grant seconds. 4-0-0.*

Decisions/Actions

- School Committee welcomed student representatives Jennie Moss and Bridget Lashway.
- Adjustments to the agenda included: student representatives to School Committee; vote on bus bid.
- School Committee will discuss the moratorium on standardized statewide testing presented by the HEA and MTA in January when a HEA representative is present.
- Committee members discussed the advantages and disadvantages of administering PARCC/MCAS in 2016.

Summary of Discussion on Each Subject Presented to Committee for Consideration

Hopkins Academy Social Studies Department Field Trip to Washington DC October 20-23 2016

Committee members reviewed the field trip request from Jason Burns included in the school committee packet for December. Members discussed which classes participate (grades 11-12) and the cost (\$640.00 per student).

MCAS Accountability Data 2015

McKenzie presented 2015 accountability data released by DESE in December. The district remains at level 2. The data reflects the calculations McKenzie did by hand in August. One change McKenzie noted was in the annual PPI for HA high needs students. DESE calculated PPI at 70 for 2015 due to the fact that the criteria for a student being placed in the economically disadvantaged subgroup changed. DESE decided to hold districts harmless for this subgroup. The data presented included SGP comparisons for 2014 and 2015 for each group. For the most part all subgroups showed moderate growth in 2015. Several groups (HES all students, HES high needs, district all students) exhibited significant improvement.

Mid-year Science Appointment HA Middle School

Ms. Savoy has accepted a position in West Springfield. The position has been posted. Cathy Niedziela, Susan Duncan, and Mr. Beck will review applications and begin interviewing immediately after break. If we do not hire a teacher prior to Ms. Savoy's departure, Ms. Chapman has agreed to substitute. Grant questioned why administration elected to post for a permanent position instead of a long-term substitute given the timing. McKenzie explained that the district had received applications from qualified, certified and experienced applicants.

Student Representatives

Beck explained HA Student Council has amended its constitution to include how student representatives are appointed. Phifer asked about the role of student representatives. Grant explained the law requires student representation on school committees. McKenzie stated that student representatives will receive a copy of the packet so they can discuss relevant topics with the student body and provide a student perspective for the committee.

Public Comment Period

Klesch read items 1-6 from policy BEDH pertaining to public participation at school committee meetings. Louise Nunn (paraprofessional Hadley Elementary School) read a statement on behalf of Unit D. A copy of the statement will be posted on the district website with the December School committee minutes. Paula Cristoforo, speaking as a parent, stated her support for the paraprofessionals. She underscored the valuable contributions Unit D members make to the district. Klesch, speaking as a parent, commented on the important work that paraprofessionals do. Klesch indicated that Unit D negotiations are progressing. Currently management and labor are discussing compensation. Klesch complimented Unit D for their eloquent statement.

District Strategy Progress Report

McKenzie provided a progress update on various district activities that align with and support the district strategy. Klesch asked about using technology to improve writing instruction. McKenzie and Udall indicated that the HES budget request will include increasing the education technology position to full time. Cristoforo (member of the public) added that the district previously had a full time education technology teacher at Hadley Elementary. She recommends reinstating this position. Klesch asked Fasihuddin if increasing the education technology specialist to full time aligns with the District Technology Plan. Fasihuddin indicated it did and that adopting the recommendations of the Technology Plan will prepare students for online standardized testing.

Personnel Report

McKenzie reviewed the personnel report. Grant expressed her appreciation for Mr. Skelley's work in the district.

Expense Report

Desjardins reviewed the expense report. Desjardins made necessary transfers to bring lines to zero or a positive balance.

Revolving Accounts

Desjardins has not received information from the town accountant regarding status of revolving accounts.

Grant Report

Desjardins presented the grant report. Desjardins would like to spend down grants to avoid having funds cut mid-year.

Generator Contract

Desjardins received the signed generator contracts. He anticipates having a timeline/project status report for the committee in January.

Energy Rates

Desjardins is looking to lock in electricity and oil in January. He anticipates energy prices will be less than anticipated in FY17.

Mentoring Stipend

Desjardins will present the request to pay FY15 mentoring stipend in January.

Bus Bids

District received four bids. The lowest bidder presented a bid for a 2016 bus on a 2015 chassis. The committee must determine whether the bid meets the specifications (i.e., is responsive and responsible). Grant stated it is impossible to compare bids if the bids do not use the same year for parts. Desjardins stated he spoke with school counsel who said rejecting the bid is legally defensible. Phifer asked about the price differences between the two lowest bids. Desjardins stated the bid with both 2015 and 2016 parts was \$52,178 and the next lowest bid with all 2016 parts was \$54,393. Phifer stated it is unfair to the other bidders if the committee considers a bid with 2015 parts. Phifer asked if the other bidders indicated if all parts are 2016 or did they fail to specify. Desjardins indicated

that no other bidder specified but Desjardins said he could clarify with the bidders. Grant pointed out that we cannot know if the second lowest bidder intends to use 2016 parts.

Meritorious Budget Award from Association of School Business Officials

McKenzie announced the budget for FY16 received the Meritorious Budget Award.

Unit D Negotiations

Klesch reported discussions with labor are ongoing. There are meetings scheduled into January. Labor and management continue discussing compensation.

Parent and Community Survey

Klesch would like to review the parent and community survey in January in order to make revisions. Klesch asked the public and parents to contact her if they are interested in working on the survey – either designing the survey or analyzing data. Fasihuddin suggested streamlining the survey and aligning it with the district strategy.

Building and Grounds Subcommittee

Phifer is looking to schedule a meeting in January. Phifer continues to speak with interested members of the community on how to best parse out the work into a financially manageable project. Phifer anticipates requesting help from community volunteers. Klesch asked if members of the community are to be a part of a committee. Grant clarified that there is no ad hoc committee. The community committee dissolved after the design was accepted. Klesch asked how the subcommittee would like to get volunteers from the community. Phifer said the subcommittee will discuss at a subcommittee meeting in January.

CES Update

Grant reported the full CES financial audit for FY15 is available to the public in the superintendent's office. Grant discussed the CES Board position calling upon policy makers to evaluate the disproportionate impact of charter schools on small and rural districts and to revisit the funding formula. McKenzie asked the committee if they would like to take a formal position on the matter. Committee members would like to discuss in January.

Evaluation of Meeting

Committee members expressed satisfaction with the meeting.

List of Documents and Exhibits Used at Meeting

- Agenda December 21, 2015
- November 23, 2015 School Committee Minutes
- Field Trip Request Washington DC October 2016
- Letter from HEA President requesting support for moratorium on high-stakes standardized tests
- Resolution calling for a moratorium on high-stakes standardized tests
- Summary of MCAS Accountability Data 2015
- Statement from Unit D
- District Strategy Document and Progress Report
- Personnel Report 12/21/2015
- Expense Report 12/17/2015
- Grant Allocations for FY16 dated 12/20/2015
- Letter to the Editor from CES
- Comments about charter school debate from Hampshire Gazette

Names of Remote Participants

No members participated remotely.

Next Regular Meeting Dates

January 25, 2016 at 5:30

Adjournment _____6:32_____PM

Read Louise Nunn
12-21-15

When I tell people I work at Hadley Elementary I always get the same response, "Oh, I hear that's a good school system." I agree with them and I believe that the Education Support Professionals of Hadley, the 'paraprofessionals', are an essential part of that good education.

Massachusetts is considered to be the most educated state in the union, a state that values education and delivers quality to its students. Even on the international PISA test of 15 year olds, Massachusetts ranked in the top 10 in the world. Hadley is a good school in a great state, and we are part of that success.

We believe that the Hadley community and school administration value a good education. We know that to be true because when they hire new paraprofessionals they always choose the most experienced and academically best qualified candidates they can find. Among your paraprofessionals you will find that a Bachelors degree is standard, and a teaching license or advanced degree is not unusual. If you believe in quality in education, you know that that quality comes through in our work. If it didn't, why attain a good education?

All the students of Hadley benefit from our education and experience, whether they are receiving one-on-one support as per their IEP, or direct instruction in small groups, or education from class specific aides who deliver, along with the teacher, the curriculum we know works in Massachusetts. If your child never receives support directly from paraprofessionals, he is an unusual child in this system. At the very least he benefits from our work with needier students, freeing the teachers to deliver curriculum to the majority of the class.

We are asking for fair pay for our work. Currently some of us are paid more, some less, with no apparent system to determine who is paid what. There are paraprofessionals in this system paid \$14.73/ hr who have been here for years and years. Sometimes they have to cover for teachers all day, becoming the teacher, even supervising a substitute teacher, with no extra pay for all that work, responsibility, extra time spent, and experience. There are paraprofessionals paid \$16.84 ~~per~~ per hour who have only been in the school district for a couple of years, are far less experienced, and have fewer academic qualifications. This is not equitable. We ask that our pay be aligned fairly to reflect years of service and qualifications, and that the base pay of every Education Support Professional be raised to reflect the work we really do every day in our schools.

We are smart people and it impacts every interaction we have with Hadley students, and improves every task we are asked to complete. People move to this area because of the quality of life it affords. They choose Hadley because of the great schools it offers. We never have a shortage of school choice applicants when we open a grade. We have schools we can be proud of, students, teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators we can be proud of, but we have a pay scale that does not reflect that pride and achievement.

Thank you for your time and attention.