

**HADLEY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS
January 23, 2012**

6:30 PM Regular Meeting

Hopkins Academy Music Room

PRESENT: Chair: Ms. Robie Grant, Members Present: Ms. Molly Keegan, Mr. Thomas Waskiewicz and Ms. Linda Dunlavy. Absent: Vice Chair, Mr. James Michalak. Student Representatives, Matt Waskiewicz and Lauren Robinson. Also present: Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Nicholas Young, Carol Trane, Administrative Assistant, Hopkins Academy Principal, Diana Bonneville, Hadley Elementary Principal, Jeff Udall, HEA President, Jack Horrigan, and Edward Dunn, Senior Education Consultant and David Lockwood, CEO of The Management Solution. Richard Trueswell of TV5 and Ben Storrow, Reporter-Daily Hampshire Gazette.
Others Present: Please see attendance list attached to and made a part of these minutes.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair, Ms. Robie Grant called the meeting to order at 6:33 P.M.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

MOTION: (Dunlavy/Waskiewicz) move to approve the minutes of the December 19, 2011, meeting as presented. **VOTE: Unanimous.**

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Due to the large number of parents in attendance, Dr. Young asked to use this time to address 2nd Grade sensing many of the parents had concerns. He said he understood there have been a group of parents meeting about 2nd Grade and one particular teacher, who's name he wasn't going to mention. Dr. Young said this is difficult to fully address because there are so many things going on behind the scenes that he can't comment on due to student confidentiality, and a variety of procedural steps that must be followed. First and foremost, he wanted to acknowledge there are concerns about some behavioral issues in one particular section; the school has taken a series of steps to address those issues. The school has hired a paraprofessional for that classroom, there is a behavioral specialists working very closely with the teacher, also working with a series of parents and taking other steps involving student services and other examinations that are taking place, there are legal protocols, plus timelines that the school is working through. Dr. Young spoke on behalf of the administration, saying that they are aware of the problems, they recognize them and are taking a series of steps to address and correct them, taking into account procedural guidelines that must be adhered to. He assured the parents that it's the school's number one priority and expects the situation to improve sooner rather than later and that the administrators are using every option that they have to correct the problem and offered that reassurance to the parents present at this meeting.

School Committee heard from a number of parents who shared their frustrations and ideas for solutions. One parent asked that the administration consider splitting the 2nd Grade into three classes; another suggestion was to set up a behavioral oasis space so that a student can be removed from a class and put into another environment if necessary. Parents expressed concerns that the educational requirements of this class are not being met even with the addition of a paraprofessional.

Parent Heather Ciaglo read from a statement, asking that a comprehensive review of all the needs at the elementary school should be done and that it's more of a priority to bring certain areas of student services back up to previous levels, such as the return of a fulltime adjustment counselor and part-time and fulltime speech and language therapist before funding a Media Specialists. She also spoke in support of an additional teacher for next year's 3rd Grade class. Again stating, she is not against a Media Specialist, but believes at this time it's a position that's nice to have, not needs to have. She requested the Committee to do a comprehensive review of all needed positions and the results and priorities thought out and shared with the community. One parent, new to Hadley, spoke of her disappointment in not having a math

specialist to assist students who are having trouble in math especially considering these students take the math test next year. She spoke of coming from a district that had zero tolerance for unacceptable behavior.

Dr. Young wanted to reiterate a point that he understood what was said yet he's not at liberty to divulge all of the things that are being done, adding we are in the business of educating all students and have a responsibility to follow a legally mandated process with a set of timelines attached that are dictated by the federal government. To the parent that asked for a timeline, Dr. Young said he felt confident that by the end of February he would be ready to have a conversation with the parents and ask Principal Udall to communicate with the parents. Dr. Young commented on having an oasis room or planning room that would come with a whole host of legal ramifications. He would like to focus on what can be accomplished in the next 30 days in terms of the steps that can be taken within the schools. At this time, Dr. Young felt it was premature to recommend a third 3rd Grade teacher for next year as several parents have suggested believing there has to be a resolution to the current situation in the classroom. This problem first came to him in January and he assured everyone he is taking the legal steps required and at the end of 30 days he will not hesitate to ask for additional resources if necessary, adding if special education services are required, they are mandated and does not require coming back to the SC for additional resources.

In response to a parent who questioned why and how parents receive communications about changes happening in the classroom during this period, noting the addition of a paraprofessional, Dr. Young said typically parents communicate directly with the principal. Dr. Young will also become part of the process and will ask that this become a running agenda item on the School Council meetings where updates will be made available. Dr. Young said perhaps Mr. Udall could also put out a newsletter to keep parents informed. Dr. Young also encouraged parents to attend the School Council meetings where staffing needs are discussed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair, Ms. Grant reported on receiving some questions about the School Committee's Subcommittees that were instituted last fall and meet on an as-needed basis. They are working groups and don't have regular schedules. The Policy committee has not yet met, Building and Grounds has met once and the Finance Subcommittee has met three times. Minutes will be made available to anyone who requests them.

PRESENTATION – THE MANAGEMENT SOLUTION

Mr. David Lockwood, one of the owners of The Management Solution, a Mass. company based out of Auburn, MA., said they provide services to a number of school systems throughout the state. Currently they are working with Ware Public Schools, Granby Public Schools, Easthampton, Belchertown, Ludlow and recently engaged at Mt. Greylock Regional Public Schools and are working on a project with the Munson Public Schools. Mr. Lockwood distributed a six-page handout covering the resume of the partners along with an explanation of their services. This handout also covered a list of frequently asked questions and their answers.

Mr. Lockwood said the company works with school districts to predominately take over the role of business management functions and assist with whatever their needs happen to be. The company does not have a cookie-cutter approach to what they do; it's really down to what the district asks them to do. They can do everything from managing the budgetary requirements, to curriculum instruction, adding they have a number of people who work for them who have expertise in many areas.

Ms. Keegan said she wanted to hear from this group given Hadley's current concerns with limited resources.

Mr. Lockwood said a school system hires them for specific tasks for which they would then quote a price for that particular service. It would be difficult to quote any dollar amounts without seeing what list of projects or services might be needed. As an example, in the districts where they provide a full array of services, they are saving a district somewhere in the \$20,000 to \$30,000 range in cost savings in not having to pay benefits or professional development. There are savings in belonging to a larger bloc of schools when it comes to energy savings in buying in bulk. Waste removal has been another area where savings has been realized by grouping several districts together to negotiate a joint bid.

Mr. Lockwood said in every district where their contract has come up for renewal, they have been renewed. If they do not deliver on their end, there is no obligation to continue.

The Management team is very data driven in their decision-making, adding that even if a district ends up spending the same number of dollars it helps the district focus in the most meaningful way.

Another area they focus on is financial reporting on a monthly basis to allow for the most up-to-date financial information to assist in making spending decisions and also be on the alert of overspending in the regular school budget or on the other hand, not spending enough out of grants.

In response to their fee structure, Mr. Lockwood again reiterated districts are charged by the amount of service required. The company will come in and do an initial assessment, once engaged, and figure out how best to fit what they do in with what the district has in place. They look at how the purchase order system is working, how the payroll is being handled, how the budget development is working, etc., and then apply the best practices they've learned during their time reviewing other district across the commonwealth. There are districts that ask them to come in and mentor their business manager to asking them to come in and do everything. Mr. Lockwood encouraged the Committee to talk with districts they are currently working for and ask questions.

In response to a question, Mr. Lockwood said they go into every district and do an evaluation with their auditor's eyes and ask how would the district do if they were audited right now by the state. Recommendations would be made and shared with either the superintendent or school committee depending on current policy. If the district decides to hire Management Solutions, then an agreed upon list of services would be agreed upon and a fee established.

Members thanked Mr. Lockwood and the other members of his company for their attendance and presentation this evening.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS SUBCOMMITTEE

Members received a printout of the subcommittee's December 21, 2011 meeting listing those present as Mr. James Michalak, Mr. Thomas Waskiewicz and Dr. Young.

Mr. Waskiewicz reviewed the list of Capital Buildings and Grounds recommendations that are filed with and made a part of these minutes.

Phase 1 (6 Months to 1 Year)

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| • Renovate five classrooms-Middle School | \$100,000-\$120,000 |
| • Replace doors in East West and South ends at Hopkins | \$60,000 |
| • Renovate Computer Lab into Science Lab-Elementary | \$60,000 |
| • Complete air conditioning in three areas at Hopkins | \$45,000 |

Phase 2 (2-3 Years)

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|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| • Renovate Boys' Locker Room-Hopkins | \$500,000 |
| • Renovate Girls' Locker Room-Hopkins | \$450,000 |

Phase 3 (3-5 Years)

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| • Replace Secondary School Lockers-Hopkins | \$160,000 |
| • Air Condition (1) Wing – Elementary | \$150,000 |
| • Air Condition (Second) Wing-Elementary | \$150,000 |
| • Air Condition (Final) Wing – Elementary | \$150,000 |
| • Replace Heating Vents – Hopkins | \$150,000 |
| • Expand Hopkins Parking Lot | \$80,000 |
| • Update Elementary Parking Lot | \$30,000 |
| • Repair/Re-point Hopkins Chimney | \$10,000 |

In response to the funding for field development, Mr. Waskiewicz said he was under the impression that this would be phased in, hopefully with grant money. The Building and Grounds Subcommittee will continue to meet and see what is doable as the budget develops.

FY'13 BUDGET

Dr. Young started with the bottom-line figure of \$6,585,031 from the FY13 draft budget. He noted that the SC goes through several meetings on the budget of which this is the first cut and will continue to be discussed until it's presented to Town Meeting in May.

The budget before the SC this evening contains no new programs, no new services, nor any cost of living adjustments for employees. It does account for teacher's steps and does include one special education paraprofessional added into the budget this year and is carried over to meet a special ed requirement.

Increases in special ed reflect what is currently required. Vocational budgeting reflects the number of students that are currently scheduled to attend.

Starting Point Budget	\$6,585,031
FY12 Town Starting Point -	5,379,272
Difference	\$1,205,759
Less Projected Grants	316,000
Difference with Grant Offsets	\$ 889,759
Reduce by FY12 Pre-purchases	144,500
Gap	\$ 745,259
Increase of 5.25%	

Dr. Young said he felt it was fair to say this gap exceeds what we substantially could expect to get in additional money from the town and certainly exceed what can be raised in School Choice, adding he believes it exceeds both combined.

Referring to the request list, Dr. Young read six non-prioritized positions previously discussed as possible new positions.

1.	Elementary Media Specialist	\$53,288
2.	Secondary World Language Teacher	\$68,432
3.	Third, 3 rd Grade Teacher	\$45,968 or a
4.	General Ed Paraprofessional	\$15,000
5.	.5 FTE Elem. Math Remedial Teacher	\$22,984
6.	.5 Math Coordinator (District-wide)	\$31,816
	Total	\$237,488

Dr. Young said he believed an additional World Language Teacher was a necessity since more students are signing up for either French or Spanish.

Not to be forgotten, there are still a series of other mandates that are yet to be accounted for, plus contract negotiations. Dr. Young noted that he has been involved in budgeting in Hadley for many years and has never seen the budget in this difficult a position before in the Hadley Public Schools.

Dr. Young noted that this budget is too lean, adding, the current budget is under funded. Referring again to the wish list, Dr. Young said the World Language Teacher is a necessity, not just a wish.

Dr. Young was asked how much money would be needed from School Choice funds to balance the FY12 budget. Referring to page 13 of the draft budget, he read off a list of additional costs added by the SC from the start of the fiscal year bringing the total needed from Choice funds to \$612,206. School Choice raises approx. \$400,000 per year. More is being spent than is being brought in and that will also be the case for next year.

Dr. Young said the Committee will have this information to digest and will continue to work on the budget until they are ready to make some decisions about what, if anything, they feel they can afford on the additional request list.

Ms. Keegan said Hadley has enjoyed having school choice income and considers us a destination school, adding we must be cognizant of what our neighbors are doing, noting, Amherst is now expanding their School Choice program that could impact our program and present a challenge for Hadley.

Ms. Grant proposed agreeing on a budget number to give to the town. Ms. Dunlavy said the starting figure was \$5,379,272 with the shortfall of \$745,259, plus \$223,000 in additional requests, making a total shortfall of \$968,259. If this were offset with the same amount of School Choice money, there would then be a deficit of \$500,553. Ms. Dunlavy proposed asking the town for \$5.879. There was concern that the request should be higher to address additional staffing positions, the concern for adequate Choice funds and the need for cost of living increases. Both Ms. Keegan and Mr. Waskiewicz said they were concerned about going in too low. Dr. Young again reminded the Committee that there may still be additional special ed costs not in the draft budget, and reminded the Committee the budget does not contain retention of the additional elementary paraprofessional, does not included the World Language teacher needed at Hopkins, nor is there any allowance for COLAs. The budget does included steps for teachers in accordance with the Evergreen clause ruling of the State Supreme Court.

Dr. Young said this draft is offered as a state of the financial affairs of the district and the SC will have several months to work their way through a serious process.

Ms. Dunlavy figured that a 3% COLA would require an additional \$200,000.

Members discussed what figure they would submit to the town and agreed to a \$6.2M figure.

Ms. Keegan wondered if special ed received funds up front could there be an agreement to return the unused portion of those funds back to the town if not needed. Dr. Young said if that happened, then yes, funds could be returned.

Dr. Young reminded the Committee that the FY12 Budget is being run in the red, noting we started the year with less money allocated from the town, making it necessary to take several hundred thousand dollars from the School Choice account. The official request has not yet been made by the SC to have monies transferred out of the Choice account because Dr. Young hopes to reduce that figure if at all possible; however, a request will have to be made when the current budget is nearing depletion.

Ms. Grant asked again if the \$6.2M figure is the figure to take to the town. All agreed.

Members discussed having an additional February meeting and will determine the date after meeting with the Select Board.

OTHER:

January 1, 2012 Enrollment Update

New Hire – Michael Burgess LTS Middle School Math

NEASC Progress Report

Principal Bonneville's Jan. Letter to Students, Parents and Guardians

Balance Sheets dated July 1, 2011 to January 23, 2012

NEXT MEETING

February 27, 2012, 6:30PM.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: (Waskiewicz/Dunlavy) move to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 PM. VOTE: Unanimous.