

**HADLEY SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS 01035  
October 28, 2013**

**6:30 PM**

**Music Room Hopkins Academy**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chair, Ms. Molly Keegan, called the meeting to order at 6:31pm

**PRESENT:** Ms. Molly Keegan, Chair; Ms. Linda Dunlavy, Vice Chair/Secretary  
Members: Ms. Humera Fasihuddin, Ms. Robie Grant, Ms. Heather Klesch

OTHERS: Donna Moyer, Superintendent, Chris Desjardins, Business Manager; Jeff Udall, HES Principal; Brian Beck, HA Principal; Pat Bell, Caitlin Lord, Jack Horrigan, April Camuso, Jason Burns, Tim Neyhart

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – SC meeting minutes from September 9, 2013 and September 23, 2013 unanimously approved.

**ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA** - None

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**- None

**INFORMATION AND/OR DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Fire on Russell Street in Hadley – Molly expressed concern, support and condolences on behalf of the schools for Hadley business owners impacted by the fire on Russell Street. Thanks were extended to all responders.

New School Committee Secretary – Molly welcomed Caitlin Lord to the position of school committee secretary.

MCAS Results and Accountability Status Presentation – Donna prefaced the presentation by explaining that it was a macro-overview of the MCAS results. She asked that anyone desiring of more detailed information, such as numbers and charts, to please let the SC know and they would be more than happy to provide it. Pat stated that the district had taken a reduction in status based on the composite scores and explained how those scores are determined. Although points were lost due to not meeting targets for specific groups, overall the district did very well in many areas. The composite score is comprised of aspects of the school such as drop out rates, graduation rates, and other factors not related to MCAS, and is a more full bodied representation of a district. Pat indicated that it was in performance indicators for sub-groups where points were lost, although some of the sub-groups not expected to do well did exceptionally well. There are many areas of great strength highlighted in the data. Advancement in Science and Math are noteworthy. Though there are pockets in grade levels and subgroups (students with special needs, low income students and ELL students) in need of improvement, there are several things already being done to target weak areas. Pat cautioned against being too distraught at losing a level or judging performance solely on this measure, as many positives are not measurable by MCAS. Donna stated that previously some of the district MCAS data was not seen. The special needs, low income and ELL groups in the district were not statistically large enough for the state to present data on. Now that they have been grouped together, the district is aware of problem areas and can begin addressing them with interventions and remedial efforts. Brian stated that Hopkins Academy is small enough that high needs students can be identified individually, and their growth over time can be examined with state resources and interventions can be targeted directly. The 10<sup>th</sup> grade at Hopkins did exceptionally well on MCAS. Hopkins 10<sup>th</sup> grade achieved 100% Proficient or Advanced in ELA. 10<sup>th</sup> grade Math at Hopkins secured the top spot in the state with an 86% SGP (Student Growth Percentile). The average SGP is 51%, making an 86% SGP remarkable. 100% Proficient or Advanced in ELA is a testament to changes made to the curriculum in the high school last year. In terms of improvement, middle school ELA scores in both grades revealed a need for a team-based approach to teaching reading comprehension. Item analysis on that level pinpoints changes that need to be made to the curriculum and the structure of it's implementation. Professional Development last year focused on the curriculum; pressures to integrate the common core and a team structure where teachers have 45 minutes of meeting time

together each day, give the opportunity to drive both reading and writing into each of the content areas. In 8<sup>th</sup> grade Math, the item analysis revealed more time must be focused on Functions, Equations and Expressions. 7<sup>th</sup> grade Math revealed the need to make adjustments to curriculum in terms of Geometry, Ratios, Proportions and Relationships. Teachers have stated some of this had to do with the timing of the test and the curriculum's delivery. High needs students will need to be looked at individually and more can be done in class, but a number of teacher's do a phenomenal job of in-class intervention. Professional Development will focus on developing and expanding not just standardized testing, but ensuring that teachers can make adjustments in real time without waiting for test data by making small assessments throughout the year. Molly asked if most of the focus at Hopkins would be on the middle school for Math and ELA, and Brian replied that the middle school focus would carry over to the high school by continuing to tie in the common core. HS teachers are integrating writing into their math curriculum and will be providing small assessments in math courses. Jeff stated that at the elementary school the low income student subgroup exceeded the state's average by 11%. Open Response Writing scores for grades 3-6 met or exceeded the state averages. The scoring gap for Grade 4 Long Composition is closing and is closer to the state average, continuing to make progress. There was a slight decrease across the grades in Math, with the most decrease in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Measurement, Data, Fractions and Geometry in most of the grade levels showed low performance; these topics were just being taught at the time of the test. Instructional practices and strategies will be adjusted. HES will also be reinstating a .5 Math Coaching position this year to provide math remediation to small groups of students in need. Permission from parents was received to provide these students with "double dipping" instruction so they will not miss out on regular class instruction. Assessment data will be examined at the beginning, middle and end of the school year. Jeff has been working with HES teachers to develop more effective ways to use formative assessment data to drive instruction and student learning. Molly asked for clarification that the Math curriculum was not being pushed at the expense of the ELA curriculum as it had in the past, inquiring if students seeking help from the Math Coach would miss out on ELA instruction. Jeff clarified that a 120 minute ELA Block and a 90 minute Math Block were built into the curriculum and any aid provided would not deprive students of critical instruction. Humera inquired as to how many times the district does MAP testing. Pat replied it would be three times in the current school year so that the results could be used to develop teaching strategies. Robie inquired as to the amount of testing students would undergo overall. Donna replied she would be better prepared to answer the inquiry at the next meeting, after further discussion with John Robert. Donna stressed in conclusion that although 4<sup>th</sup> 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade results are often the focus of discussion, the results are a composite reflection of all grade levels operating on a continuum.

Hopkins Academy Bell Project – Tim presented materials from the Hopkins 350<sup>th</sup> Committee, who approached Tim to see if they could aid in protection of the Hopkins school bell. The Hopkins school bell is unique, it was commissioned by the Hadley Society in 1882 and is one of the largest school bells ever commissioned. The bell has been in storage for many years in numerous places, and is currently located by the Public Safety building. Tim volunteered his services as Building Commissioner to develop the idea for the Hopkins Academy Memorial Park. The park would include a gazebo in the front of Hopkins which would house and protect the bell. The project has become large, with many volunteers. The gazebo will be 14 feet in diameter and no trees will be disrupted. The bell is 3 feet in diameter and weighs 300 pounds. The yoke and frame holding the bell will need reinforcement, but community members have volunteered to help. Robie inquired as to whether the clapper inside the bell was removed. Tim stated the bell will be secured so that it does not ring, but that the sound of the bell will be recorded after the bell is fixed. The recording will be put on a mechanism with a timer so that it will only ring when desired. Tim stated that light around the gazebo will also be timed, and that power will be run to the gazebo in case Hopkins Academy would like to use the bell. Linda inquired about the timing of the project. Tim stated they thought they would start in November with the base, but this depends on when the parts are fixed in the bell. A crane will be needed to set the bell. The roof structure will need to be built and put on top of the frame itself. Tim stated he suspected everything should be together by mid-December 2013. Tim stated that students could also create a time capsule to build into the gazebo during construction. Heather stated that renovation of the bell may open the way to new traditions for Hopkins students akin to the way many colleges use bells. Humera asked if the clapper could be unsecured for symbolic celebrations and graduations. Tim stated it will be looked into. Donna instructed Tim to meet with Brian to discuss further.

Hopkins Academy Foreign Field Trip - Donna that the field trip is now scheduled to take place next year over spring break, instead of during the approaching summer. April stated that the upcoming trip is different from previous trips because it is expanded to include current 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Having more Hopkins students on the trip will prevent the group from having to combine with other groups from other schools and having to share resources. Linda asked what the goal was insofar as the number of students attending. April replied that she hopes for between 30-40 students, and added that with each six students a chaperone ticket is included. Molly inquired as to the cost of the trip compared to past trips. April replied it is comparable to the trip to Italy and Greece, but more than the trip to Paris and Barcelona. April attributed the cost differential to the time of year that the trips took place as well as geographical distance. Molly inquired about fundraising that would be available for students in need of it. April stated that fundraising is available but depends on student participation. Brian stated that in other districts he'd worked in, students were required to put on a presentation and write a report concerning the trip, for which they received school credit. Tying the trips into school credit may cultivate more fundraising opportunities. Pat stated she took three student groups on foreign field trips and fundraising was done each time. Each time the profits were shared equally amongst the students. Heather asked for clarification on the chaperone ticket provided for ever six students, wondering if the ticket needed to be used for a chaperone. April replied that a space for a non-chaperoning adult was possible if the number of needed chaperones had already been met. Linda said she wanted to discuss the educational experience on all sides; the fundraising, the trip itself, and any expectations for students afterward. Donna stated Jason, April and Brian would discuss the structure of that if the trip is approved.

Heather motioned to approve the trip. All were in favor.

Parent Survey Committee – Heather stated she and Humera have been working on the questions and are now the using Endicott Resource Center as the source. An initial mapping has been done. After finalizing draft mapping and group review, they hope to hold a parent focus group before finalizing the actual survey. The December SC meeting is the target date for the group review.

Athletic Fields Committee – Molly and Robie went before the Community Preservation Act members to update them of their plans. A survey was done of the property before the purchase of the additional seven acres of land and now the useability of the original survey is in question. A new survey will need to be done if Randy Isser does not have additional info.

Molly motioned to approve the use of up to \$5k in School Choice funds to cover the cost of the new survey. All were in favor.

Safe Routes To School/Walking Trail: Chris has communicated with the state regarding Safe Routes to School, but there are many sidewalk issues. Linda stated that in order to get state funding, a year of active promotion will need to take place.

Tri-Board: Molly stated the Tri-Board is meeting Wednesday, Oct. 30<sup>th</sup>. The DOR report approved long range planning, strategic planning, and ongoing maintenance across town. Representatives from each Tri-Board got together with David

Nixon to discuss hiring a financial consultant on a short term/contract basis to develop meaningful financial reports. The financial consultant was approved and will be discussed on Oct. 30<sup>th</sup> in more detail. The budget process for the coming fiscal year will also be discussed.

Superintendent Search Sub-Committee: Things are going well, a healthy and competitive response has been received. Robie stated that semi-finalist interviews should happen in the following week. Nov. 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> were suggested for finalist interviews beginning at 5pm.

Business Manager Report: Chris asked if the School Committee had a preference for when reports would be run- as a month-end report or closer to the dates the committee meets. Chris states there are items that need to be moved to different accounts and those changes may not be reflected in a month-end report. Molly asked if reports are effective-dated, and Chris stated he attempts to do so when possible. Molly stated she would prefer a month end report if effective-dated, otherwise the most recent suffices. Chris supplied a grant report comparing the current year to last year; last year much more grant money was received. There is additional grant money assumed to be coming, but no dollar amount has been received yet. The district was told last year to expect a decrease in funds. The End of the Year report will be filed today, Oct. 28<sup>th</sup>. Chris will now begin preparing items for the upcoming audit. Chris found that the electric bill for July was paid twice in error. Mary will unencumber some of the money and adjustments will be made. The Hopkins Academy door replacement has become a problematic project, contractors have backed out of bids. Contractors ask for money up front, which municipalities cannot provide. Ads are being run for new contractors. A contractor will be selected on Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>, with bidding beginning on Nov 1<sup>st</sup>. Western Mass Electric has a new program for municipalities directed toward energy as a whole, but it is new and slow to get started. Berkshire Gas is running a natural gas line that Hadley may be able to hook up to. Chris provided the budget process for FY2015, which is ready to go. A draft budget will be done by the end of 2013. School Committee will approve the final budget by the end of March. Donna stated that the bus contract runs out this year and must be put out to bid. Hadley owns it's own as busses as well as outsources. The average increase in expenditure has been 8%. Donna would like to put the bid out both ways (continuing to use owned buses, and outsourcing all buses) to get a comparative cost. If it is decided Hadley will outsource, the owned buses can be sold. The Capital Planning committee will have a series of town meetings to discuss a Capital plan for Hadley. If the schools have any significant capital needs, they should be identified in the January meeting.

Superintendent Evaluation & Draft SMART Goals: The Superintendent Self Assessment is done on TeachPoint with what is essentially an action plan. Donna states she found the self assessment to be frustrating, not to write the goals themselves, but to pick out elements which match the goals. For example, there is no element in the superintendent rubric dealing with overseeing professional development, or technology enriched curriculum, etc. Donna requested an extension of the deadline to next month. Molly motioned to accept, all were in favor.

October 1<sup>st</sup> Enrollment Numbers: Enrollment at both HES & Hopkins is down, which will effect the budget. Donna stated this problem must be tackled immediately.

Adoption of Section A Policies: \_\_\_\_\_ moved to accept. All were in favor.

Adoption of Policy IJOA: \_\_\_\_\_ moved to accept. All were in favor.

Adoption of Policy IKE: \_\_\_\_\_ moved to accept. All were in favor.

Acceptance of Funds From Helping Hearts Hadley: Donna stated that Helping Hearts has notified the district they will be donating \$15,000 total to be distributed to each school in the amount of \$7,500. Linda motioned to accept the funding. Four were in favor, one abstained.

#### **NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE – December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

Time: 6:30pm

Location: Hopkins Academy Music Room

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION: Molly moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:41pm**

**MOTION: Molly moved to move the meeting into Executive Session, all were in favor.**

**Approved by School Committee: December 16, 2013**