

**HADLEY SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS 01035  
December 2, 2013**

**6:30 PM**

**Music Room Hopkins Academy**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chair, Ms. Molly Keegan, called the meeting to order at 6:32pm

**PRESENT:** Ms. Molly Keegan, Chair; Ms. Linda Dunlavy, Vice Chair/Secretary  
Members: Ms. Humera Fasihuddin (via cell phone), 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, Erik Sudnick, Stacey Mushenski, Stephanie Barry, Michelle Bramucci, Dana Whitney.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Approval of SC meeting minutes from October 23, 2013 postponed until December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

**ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA** – Dunlavy proposed moving the Helping Hearts for Hadley discussion from Item C to Item A in Information and/or Discussion Items section of the agenda. Keegan approved.

**DISCUSSION REGARDING INTERVIEWS WITH SUPERINTENDENT FINALISTS; FEEDBACK RECEIVED FROM COMMUNITY AND STAFF/FACULTY REGARDING THE FINALISTS** – Keegan stated all four candidates have been through full interviews with the school committee, as well as answering a half hour of questions each at a community forum on November 25<sup>th</sup>. Grant and Dunlavy, each also members of the superintendent search committee, have been working on checking candidate references and collecting feedback from a public survey.

Grant explained the reference checking procedure. Bill Erickson of the Collaborative was consulted regarding questions to ask. Questions included: if the references were ever surprised at their (the candidate's) desire to be a School Superintendent, what the candidate's leadership style was, how highly the reference regard the candidates judgment and decision making, any accomplishments, any criticism, how the candidate has handled criticism and what responsibilities of the position would be most challenging for the candidate. On a 1-5 point rating scale references were asked to rate candidates on curriculum and instruction, evaluation of student achievement, personnel performance, finance and budgeting, communication skills, negotiations in relation to staff, planning and programming development, policy development, and representation of the schools in the community.

Dunlavy stated that she and Grant each tried to speak with one reference per candidate so each could develop a different perspective. Summaries of the result of each candidates references were compiled.

Fred Venne: “With Fred Venne we only were able to talk to one reference but I don't think that's an indication of a lack of willingness as much as hard time of year to get hold of people. In summary, as we know, Fred is not actively working in a school district now and has never been a superintendent, but as a principal in Williamsburg he was a good and valued member of the admin team. He worked very well with the community and especially the Select-board. He is a strong educator and creative problem solver. While he has not done town meetings it was suspected he would do very well at town meetings. His challenges are he has limited financial experience of a full district wide budget and limited union negotiation experience. “

Anne Marie Mackenzie: “References were very positive about being asked to be references and all were quick to say that they were sad to see her leaving the Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative but respected her decision to move on. Her assets, according to her references, is she's a strong leader but also collaborative and inclusive. She's very strong with professional development, curriculum development, union negotiation. Very committed to kids and education; and while the Collaborative acts very much like a district it is not a district, so some adjustment to budgeting will be needed and right now she has a very strong CFO so would either need Chris (Desjardins) or some work in the financial area.

Judith Houle: “References included both administrators and school committee members. She is clearly a very strong and committed educator. She is well respected by her administrative team and the members that we talked to all said that she will

be missed when she leaves. Her strengths by far are curriculum development, she also is good at articulating and focusing on the mission of the school and the district improvement plan. She has had some community missteps, which she self-acknowledged, but all of her references felt she has learned from those issues.

Patricia Bell: "I specifically chose to talk to the financial person from Mohawk, which, Brian Beck will know, she's one tough cookie. I talked to her, she and the person that Robie talked to identified assets that Pat is an excellent communicator, she's no nonsense, she's good at working through difficult situations. Certainly kids are her first focus, but the financial person at Mohawk said she is really quite skilled at finding a way to meet the needs of every child within the financial constraints of the school district. She has a great ability to help teachers do better. Her challenges are she has no experience with full district budgeting or town meetings, and really that community aspect of being a superintendent."

Each candidate received feedback from the following amount of people via the community survey: Mackenzie: 31. Houle: 24. Venne: 23. Bell: 20.

Dunlavy stated she does not feel ready to make a decision yet and would like to do site visits. The timeline, process and guidelines for sight visits were discussed. Fasihuddin stated that she felt adding an extra week and keeping the community survey open for a little longer was a good idea. She stated she would make every effort to attend site visits. Supt. Moyer stated she felt it was important that all the candidates be treated equally, and that each candidate receive a site visit. The school committee discussed their individual availabilities for various site visits and planned an executive session on December 6th.

**PRESENTATION OF HOPKINS ACADEMY ATHLETIC PROGRAM:** Athletic Director Erik Sudnick states that he strives to bring fairness, accountability and integrity to the position. Sudnick has worked very closely with HA principal Beck regarding the program. The hiring process of coaches were discussed, including criteria, education, and evaluation. Coaching positions are re-opened each season, and former coaches need to reapply. Some job postings are in-house only, some in local papers. Hiring committee is impartial and will choose the best candidate. Once a Varsity position is filled, that Varsity coach will be enlisted to aid in Junior Varsity hiring. Sudnick holds a pre-season coaches meeting where expectations are discussed. During these meetings, coaches meet with Hadley Transportation Director Patricia Hopf to discuss bus protocols and HA school nurse Carolyn Sorrentino does blood borne pathogens training and distributes medical forms to coaches so they are prepared for medical emergencies. Coaches are required to take several National Federation of High School Sports (NFHS) courses booked through the MIAA, on coaching fundamentals, first aid, and a concussion course on the NFHS website. Sudnick monitors coaches throughout the entire season. The season is concluded with an end of season meeting; Sudnick conducts evaluations of coaches which are then signed by the coaches and sent to the Superintendent. Sudnick is currently working with Beck to start a running club in the Spring, and gauging numbers for a possible cross country program in the future.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD-** None

### **INFORMATION AND/OR DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Helping Hearts For Hadley – Helping Hearts for Hadley founder Stacey Mushenski as well as treasurer Michelle Bramucci and members Stephanie Barry and Dana Whitney were in attendance to present a check for \$15,000 to Hadley Schools which was raised during the 2013 5K race. An information and registration event for Helping Hearts For Hadley will be held at HES in the teachers room on January 9<sup>th</sup>. Supt. Moyer thanked Helping Hearts on behalf of the whole school community.

Tri Board – The next scheduled meeting is not until January. Schools will come and make presentations as part of their departmental budget meetings. The Tri Board agreed each department should have a budget draft in to David Nixon for rollup purposes by Dec 31<sup>st</sup>. A task force with a representative from each group has been formed in order to ensure equal representation.

Business Manager Report: The YTD budget report up to November 15<sup>th</sup> was made available. Starting next month and throughout the rest of the year, the report will be as of the prior month's end. All grant amounts are now known but one. A 12% decrease in budget was projected, but a 14.4% decrease was actually achieved. Funding for the Athletic Dept was discussed; the Athletic Revolving account is funded primarily by the Booster Club. Keegan stated that members of the Band and Athletic Boosters should be invited to a budget presentation so that the community will know how much the Boosters and Trustees contribute to the program. Four bids have been received on the HA door replacement/frame repair project. The project will be split into two parts- door frame repair and replacement of the doors during Christmas vacation, and rust removal and door frame repainting in the Spring. Two rusted doors will also be replaced in the HES gym; the money for this project has already

been encumbered for FY13. The POS system for lunch is up and operating smoothly. Chris Desjardins stated he will be making a few money transfers to bring accounts in line with expenses. Several SPED accounts are over budget due to funds being charged to the budget instead of grants, as well as additional students moving into the program. Once the appropriate expenses are moved into grants, the program will be closer to budget.

**MOTION: (Klesch/Grant) to accept the lowest bid amount of \$23,091 from New Systems Associates to repair doors.**

**VOTE: Unanimous.**

Superintendent Communication – Supt Moyer is still focusing on evaluations. Moyer and principals have agreed upon an evaluation tool for secretaries and administrative assistants. A discussion took place at the administrative meeting regarding a staff satisfaction survey. Budget season has opened and administrators are meeting to discuss needs, requests, how grants should be budgeted and so forth. Professional Development and Technology continues.

Administrative Communication – Udall stated the elementary school is very grateful for Helping Hearts for Hadley's support in purchasing several technology items. Items purchased are broken down into three general areas; annual subscriptions for online programs such as Brain Pop, software and equipment items such as digital cameras, microphones, tri-pods, scanners, etc. Approximately 25 teachers and some administrators recently completed a technology PD course over five sessions which was very well received. HES will be beginning NEAYC accreditation. HES has been focusing on curriculum and data assessment. The School Council at HES will be presenting a Climbing Wall fundraising initiative that members and administration would like to do at HES. This presentation will take place on the Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> SC meeting. Udall remarked the annual Thanksgiving play was a success and well attended, thanking Paula Cristoforo, Sarah Lavalley and Marilyn Brain for their involvement. The 6<sup>th</sup> grade World Fair will be held on Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>.

Beck thanked the Helping Hearts for Hadley for their fundraising and explained the ways in which their donation would be utilized at HA. Professional Development has been going well, teachers have been doing a wonderful job asking questions. Teamchairs have been increasing their collaboration and the common core has been fully integrated. Trustee funding requests have been supported entirely by the Trustees; the money will support the MCAS and honor roll breakfasts at HA as well as defraying the costs of several field trips. Beck has been working with HA guidance counselor Angie Cullinan to develop blended courses with local colleges which would enable HA students to either attain college credit or prepare for post-secondary education on HA campus. Colleges may provide a professor once a week to travel to HA campus for this purpose. As a solution to enrollment problems, different strategies for marketing HA have been developed, including the use of new technologies and media in HA Publications classes. The Peer Mentor group curriculum has been diversified and strengthened.

**MOTION: (Grant/Klesch) to accept a donation of \$24,655 from the Board of Trustees to fund items for Hopkins Academy.**

**VOTE: Unanimous.**

Personnel Report – A Drama Club Advisor has been hired, and several people who have resigned have been replaced. There is now a vacancy for a SPED para-professional.

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

Time: 6:30pm

Location: Hopkins Academy Music Room

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION: (Keegan/Dunlavy) to adjourn meeting at 8:23pm.**

**VOTE: Unanimous.**

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