

HADLEY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS 01035

December 16, 2013

6:32 PM Music Room Hopkins Academy

CALL TO ORDER: Chair, Ms. Molly Keegan, called the meeting to order at 6:30pm

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; Caitlin Lord, Administrative Assistant; Mark Acton, Jack Horrigan.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – SC meeting minutes from October 28th and December 2nd unanimously approved.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA – None

DICUSSION REGARDING INTERVIEWS WITH SUPERINTENDENT FINALISTS

Linda Dunlavy felt Pat Bell was the right hire for her current job Hadley, and that she is making significant and positive changes already. During site visits many faculty expressed they would be sad to see her leave the position she is in as a result. Dunlavy felt Judy Houle was a strong, professional, committed educator with strong curriculum experience. Dunlay expressed that during site visits for Annie Mackenzie she learned the Collaborative is more like a district than she'd previously understood, and that Mackenzie is already doing principal and teacher evaluations and understands the districts measures. Dunlavy felt Mackenzie was both student and faculty focused, seeming to be a good leader and visionary. Dunlavy expressed that although she had not attended Fred Venne's site visit, she'd heard the faculty in the

Williamsburg school still miss and respect him and she felt he would be a solid and **steadfast leader** for Hadley. Dunlavy felt all four candidates were good, but would choose Annie Mackenzie for superintendent.

Heather Klesch expressed appreciation for the vision Pat Bell had for the future of the Hadley school district as well as the current role she plays in the district currently. Klesch stated she valued Bell's openness, honesty, sincerity and problem solving attitude. Klesch felt that Judith Houle's efforts in the Belchertown school district were apparent and measurable, particularly her work in curriculum development and district improvement plans. Klesch appreciated Houle's outreach efforts as well. Klesch felt Annie Mackenzie's strengths and leadership are valued and recognized by her staff, who have been inspired by her to achieve their full potential. Klesch appreciated Mackenzie's collaborative approach and her desire to be a champion of educators. Klesch appreciated Fred Venne's definition of a successful superintendency as having progress that continues beyond the person and felt he had great vision. Klesch felt his dedication to process and sustainable systems would only help in maintaining a districts goals. Klesch felt all four candidates were good but would choose Annie Mackenzie for superintendent.

Humera Fasihuddin felt it was clear that Patricia Bell was already making an impact in Hadley and is well loved. Fasihuddin noted that faculty, staff and administration in Belchertown had great respect for Judith Houle as an administrator with deep curriculum knowledge. Fasihuddin appreciated her actions to make communication a priority. Fasihuddin also appreciated the respect and commitment felt for Annie Mackenzie by those who work with her in the Lower Pioneer Valley Education Collaborative, noting that they all felt she saw the best in them and helped them to rise to their potential via mentoring and an open door policy. Fasihuddin felt Fred Venne was well loved in Williamsburg, and that he was a man of integrity and a solid leader. Fasihuddin stated she would most like to work with Annie Mackenzie as superintendent.

Robie Grant felt all four candidates had strengths and were very different. She agreed with everything Dunlavy and Klesch stated concerning the candidates, and stated that she felt the leadership style necessary for Hadley schools was best exemplified by Annie Mackenzie. Grant also thanked Supt. Moyer for the work she's done on behalf of the district over the last year and a half, noting that candidates as strong as those in the running would not have come forward without the change and progress brought forward by Supt. Moyer.

Molly Keegan stated she was proud that these four candidates came forward for Hadley, feeling it said a lot about the district. Keegan stated Pat Bell was very student oriented and had already made an immediate positive impact on Hadley after a short tenure. Keegan felt Houle had an incredible outpouring of support from the Belchertown school system and felt she was the strongest educational leader of all the candidates. Keegan felt Annie Mackenzie had charisma, and that her communication style was special. Keegan noted Fred Venne was well loved in his former district, was passionate for the sciences and had valuable education experience. Based on teacher and faculty survey answers and comments from community members that the district is looking for a refreshing viewpoint, Keegan also feels Annie Mackenzie is the best choice as superintendent.

SURVEY FEEDBACK

There were a few additional surveys which came in. Any survey sent in subsequent to the December 2nd school committee meeting were updated to the committee.

SITE VISIT FEEDBACK

All site visits have been completed and went well. Some subset of the school committee were able to attend each, and Humera Fasihuddin attended all four. Each school committee member noted they found the site visits were helpful to their decision making.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD- Mark Acton discussed the merits of implementing a later school start time for Hopkins Academy. Acton stated that there is a lot of data to support that a later start time would have a positive effect on the health and well being of Hopkins students. Acton stated that it's true across cultures and mammals that adolescents, due to hormonal changes, struggle to go to sleep before 11pm. Requiring an adolescent to start school at a too early hour affects driving safety, long term health and sleeping habits, etc. Acton is a high school teacher who taught at a school that implemented a later start time, where he personally saw the positive changes that took place in student involvement and discussion afterward.

Keegan suggested that a later start time be added as a discussion item to a later school committee meeting with the understanding that any policy change (if agreed on) would not be implemented in the short term.

Grant stated she is interested in having the discussion as a mother of three adolescents who struggle with the early start time.

Supt. Moyer suggested that if the earlier start time is added to a future agenda, a condensed version of the data would be helpful for the discussion. Supt. Moyer also noted that there are many logistical factors that would need to be taken into account, such as the cost for bussing, after school athletic events, etc.

INFORMATION AND/OR DISCUSSION ITEMS

Budget FY15 Update – Supt. Moyer stated the provided budget is a simplistic overview of changes made by her and Desjardins and explained the process of cutting the budget. The Tri-Board committee asked Desjardins to prepare a three year prediction. The provided percentages are not prediction of an increase of the expenditure budget, but of the town's contribution. A longitudinal history of percentage increases over the last 3-5 will be presented at the next school committee meeting.

Business Manager Report – Desjardins stated the results of the energy audit showed that the conversion to gas at Hopkins would be subsidized by Western Mass Electric with a payback in seven months. The conversion is contingent upon Berkshires Gas and their capacity to supply the school with the gas needed. An earlier misreading of the boilers and burners by Berkshire Gas may have been responsible for their earlier balking at the idea. Suggestions were made for light bulb changes and an energy management system. Due to the cost of the energy management system being over 25K, Hadley will need to go to bid on it instead of partnering with Western Mass Electric. Desjardins felt this was unfair, since WMECO partnered with them on the audit over several months, but noted it is the law. Supt. Moyer stated that the cost of heating in the schools is very high and that the budget for it is not operational going forward. She felt the boilers and heating at Hopkins Academy in particular was very high. Desjardins agreed that a major upgrade would both slow the maintenance costs and close a gap in heating inefficiencies.

Desjardins presented the grant report, stating a number of transfers took place which will show up on the next month's agenda.

Desjardins offered a breakdown of maintenance and custodial expenses. Custodial expenses have been steady but are slated to go up in 2014. Ground expenses were also steady. The cost of the maintenance of equipment and facilities have increased the most due to work done to the heating system, flooring, and electrical maintenance to Hadley Elementary school due to the lightning strike.

Keegan asked if the relative percentage against the budget is high or low compared to other districts of similar size. Desjardins stated he would take a closer look at budgets for equitable districts and report back.

Dunlavy noted that there was also a lack of predictability in the transportation budget and stated she would prefer predictability. Desjardins stated that much of the budget is contingent on unpredictable factors such as equipment breaking and snow removal. Desjardins also noted that many things were charged to incorrect line items prior to his employment, and he is still moving money around to correct this. Supt. Moyer noted that there is currently no three or four year capital improvement plan, which hinders trend analysis. Head custodian Jeff Mish is looking to get estimates on the HBAC and is aware of the unpredictability in that section of the budget. Desjardins stated that Mish is doing everything humanly possible to keep costs down. Dunlavy noted that the lack of a capital plan is why “maintenance- other was overused as a line item in the past.

ACTION ITEMS

MOTION: (Fasihuddin/Dunlavy) Vote to Offer Superintendent of Schools Contract to Annie Mackenzie Contingent Upon Successful Negotiation of Contract VOTE: Unanimous

PERSONNEL REPORT

Terri Earle has been appointed as Special Ed paraprofessional at Hopkins Academy. Nick Simmons (HA) and John Pastorello (HES) have been appointed as Technology Coaches at their respective schools. Jeanne Lapan has resigned as the Secretary to the Superintendent. There are currently no vacancies.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE – January 27, 2013

Time: 6:30pm Location: Hopkins Academy Music Room

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Fasihuddin/Klesch) move to adjourn the meeting and enter executive session at 7:31pm

VOTE: Unanimous

Approved by School Committee: January 27, 2014