

**HADLEY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS
January 24, 2011**

5:30 PM Regular Meeting

Hopkins Academy Music Room

PRESENT: Chair: Mr. Thomas Waskiewicz, Vice Chair: Mr. James Michalak. Members: Ms. Linda Dunlavy, Mrs. Tracey Kelley, and Ms. Robie Grant.
Dr. Nicholas Young, Superintendent of Schools. Carol Trane, Administrative Assistant, TV5's Walter Montani and his assistant, Ms. Kristen Garand,
Members of the Hadley Virtual Innovation Planning Committee joined the School Committee: Cathy Niedziela, Jason Burns, Diana Bonneville, Terri Earle, Sharon Morrison, Tracy Kelley (School Committee) and Community Liaison, Jo-Ann Konieczny.
There were approximately 25-30 participants in attendance.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Waskiewicz welcomed everyone in the audience and called the meeting to order at 5:35 P.M.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

MOTION: (Michalak/Grant) move to approve the minutes of the November 22, 2010 Regular Session School Committee Meeting, VOTE: Unanimous.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Mr. Waskiewicz invited anyone who had anything they wished to address other than the virtual school proposal to use this time set aside for public participation. No one came forward.

PUBLIC HEARING – THE HADLEY VIRTUAL ACADEMY OF MASSACHUSETTS (5:40PM)

Dr. Young introduced the members of the Innovative Planning Committee and reminded everyone that he had laid out an innovation planning process following the regulation that lays out the individuals to be involved: including parent representation, PTO, teachers and so forth and believes Hadley followed the regulation to a tee in terms of designating the individuals to participate and publicly thanked the committee for devoting their time and energy over the past six weeks to a time-consuming project.

Dr. Young introduced Mrs. Cathy Niedziela and Mr. Jason Burns, two members of the Hopkins faculty, Mrs. Jo-Ann Konieczny who has experience as a parent with a virtual innovative school and thanked her for coming forward to offer her input; Mrs. Diana Bonneville, Principal of Hopkins Academy, Terri Earle, parent representative and president of the PTO and Mrs. Sharon Morrison who is not only a parent rep, but also elected by the PTO as their representative to the School Council. Adding also, Mrs. Tracy Kelley, School Committee Member.

The regulations require a public hearing be held as one of the final steps in this process. When the presentation is complete, Dr. Young said he will outline what the next steps will be for this project. He then asked Ms. Morrison of the Planning Committee to start off the presentation. Ms. Morrison thanked Dr. Young for being so proactive in moving Hadley forward in something that is really exciting. She said she believes the Hadley Virtual Innovation School being proposed is a wonderful opportunity for Hadley students and will open opportunities for those who are home schooled and for those students who don't seem to fit in with traditional ways of learning. Hadley schools already have on-line learning and this will expand those opportunities, offer students a challenging education that will meet state requirements for graduation but will remain flexible and innovative.

Ms. Terri Earle echoed the remarks made by Sharon Morrison, noted that to bringing this to the Hadley District will afford the opportunity for children who don't necessarily have an easy time learning in a traditional environment. Other benefits will allow Hopkins students more opportunities to take on-line courses and could allow students with mobility challenges, psychosocial disorders, learning disabilities,

family obligations that may not allow students to attend school during a normal school day, and other challenges that may be present themselves.

Mrs. Kelley said this is really a partnership between the administration, the Town of Hadley and the Kaplan Virtual Education. KVE does all of the monitoring and administration of the program. A designated principal here in Hadley would do the oversight, adding that Dr. Young has agreed to take that on to initially oversee the program get underway. Mrs. Kelley said the Hadley community does not invest taxpayer money, nor does the school budget, it is all funded through the Kaplan program, adding Kaplan does all of the major work around the program, from technology to the assessments and also Kaplan is very into process improvement by analyzing data to show gaps and make improvements as they go along. Kaplan has a great track record as far as being the vendor of choice in Florida and in numerous states right now running programs, giving them a lot of experience with a solid background.

Mrs. Jo-Anne Konieczny started by saying she was a non-voting member of the Virtual Planning Committee and attended both of the meetings the committee held to discuss and plan for a virtual school in Hadley. Since she is a parent of an on-line student she agreed to share her knowledge and experience and said she looked over the Kaplan classes which seemed virtually the same as the K-12 classes used in Greenfield where her son is registered. A day in the life of an on-line school is as follows: a student signs on and sees a list of what needs to be completed. The student clicks on that lesson, works on it to completion, and takes an assessment. The lesson is presented in three different modalities: tactile, visual and auditory. Often times the student will watch a video of a teacher explaining the lesson. Intermittently, there are sessions on line using illuminate where a teacher meets a group of students on line at a certain time and the teacher presents a topic to the class and has students interact with white boards. Ms. Konieczny likened it to the business world's use of "Go To Meeting.com". At the end of each chapter the student takes another on-line assessment and gets a grade for his or her performance. The information is presented in kind of a bland way that really encourages students to rush through and take the assessment in order to earn the grade. In conclusion she said she finds it hard to call Kaplan's education innovative, saying if she had a vote on the committee, it would be to continue looking at the possibility of some really innovative on-line education, but would not be in favor of the bland approach to education that Kaplan offers student.

Dr. Young thanked Mrs. Konieczny, then introduced Mrs. Niedziela and Mr. Burns, both teachers at Hopkins Academy.

Mrs. Niedziela said considering that the first phase will be looking at students that are going to take their complete high school curriculum in an on-line format, what Kaplan has presented is a platform of standard courses that meet high school requirements and also offer advanced level or honors level, along with the standard level and a level that Kaplan calls foundation. What Mrs. Niedziela found particularly good was that Kaplan works to put the student in the correct program for the level that the student is at. Kaplan has academic coaches that follow along with the student. Mrs. Niedziela said she looked at some of the on-line courses and found them to be quite interesting and their levels are pretty much as they claim. Looking at AP Environmental Science, which she has taught on-line for the past few years, and it is an attractive course. She could not tell if there was a textbook attached or not, but confesses she did not spend hours and hours reviewing the course. Dr. Young interjected that there is a textbook with every course.

Mr. Jason Burns, Hopkins teacher, said he looked at the course descriptions and they are very similar to what we already have at Hopkins. Therefore, he said, the students that would be in the virtual school would be taking similar courses to what is now being offered at Hopkins and are all aligned with the Massachusetts frameworks as required by law. Mrs. Niedziela noted that Kaplan's program also offered some electives, which she felt were interesting and appropriate to today's learners. They have a career planning course, they offer quite a bit with the digital offerings dealing with audio, engineering, digital photography, things kids are quite interested in. Mrs. Niedziela asked Mrs. Gerry Bonneau, the Hopkins VHS site coordinator; to provide a list of courses our students have taken and finds it pretty remarkable how close it follows the same pattern laid out by Kaplan.

Dr. Young added for those who were not familiar, Hopkins Academy has a Virtual High School program where students currently have access to on-line courses. He said our student's feedback for on-line learning has consistently been very strong and positive. Mrs. Niedziela said she was really impressed with what is required of Kaplan's teachers in the program and that they are required to do a lot of monitoring of their student's progress and feedback is within 24 hours. The students with Kaplan are required to actually have live contact with their teachers either by mail or telephone or at the asynchronies part of the class where they can participate in at anytime. There is also scheduled time when the student needs to log on and go through the illuminate lessons and help sessions. Mrs. Niedziela closed with it looks pretty solid.

Dr. Young reported that he did reference checks and the feedback has been positive and very strong and parents seem very satisfied with all the reference checks he was able to do.

Dr. Young said this committee is talking about wanting to go further, not only with this program, but wanting to go further and do some additional things that will be talked about as they move to wrap up.

Dr. Young said this model is for grades 6-12 and there would be an opportunity for students in high school to access college courses. In addition to the middle and high school curriculum, there would also be the opportunity to access on-line college courses for credit. The colleges that were surveyed (the top 10 that our students have been going to) found overwhelmingly that those colleges would be very comfortable taking students with advanced standing. Dr. Young reminded the audience that there was printed materials available for handout.

Mrs. Kelley noted that there is a handout outlining a 3-year budget of revenue and expenses based on projected enrollment. As a point of interest, Mrs. Kelley said Greenfield opened their Virtual School in October of 2010 and they are at almost 300 students at this point; saying, it grew rather quickly. The first year projection for Hadley of approx. 245 students, with tuition for each student at \$5,000 and could bring in approx. \$73,500. The expenses are purely Kaplan expenses, not Hadley expenses. Hadley would get 6% of the gross revenue off the top without any payout of expenses. This goes through 2012-2013 the enrollment is expected to increase to 450; and in 2013-2014 increase to 500 in the third year and would be at the cap Mass. has set for virtual schools but the cap may be lifted in the future.

Dr. Young added to the budget discussion by saying the virtual students do not impact the foundation enrollment from a budgetary perspective from the town. This would be a concern if the virtual enrollment figured into the town's minimum contribution to the schools.

Mrs. Bonneville, Principal of Hopkins Academy, said one of her primary concerns is meeting students' needs and with the Kaplan program they can meet everybody's needs from the remedial level all the way up to college courses and advanced placement courses. Kaplan's instructional approach is predicated on understanding and supporting all the students regardless of their abilities with all students receiving cognitive instruction, personal attention and individualized support. While students are enrolled, it is the sending district's responsibility to provide any special education services and costs. No one expects a large special education population because this may not be the most appropriate placement for these students. If a virtual placement is deemed appropriate, every effort will be made to make accommodations. If a student has an IEP or 504 Plan they will be given an academic improvement plan and if the AIP does not work, students are given a more intensive success path, where performance goals are set weekly and are tracked. Also students participate in three coaching sessions a week where coaches help them set goals.

Mrs. Bonneville said our school does very well on MCAS testing. All fulltime virtual academy students must participate in MCAS testing regardless of where they live. It is anticipated that our scores will remain high since we are targeting more motivated students and as far as testing sites go, students will have three different options: 1) each county will be given a designated space where the virtual students could test. 2) They could access a proctoring space through a web cam which would monitor them or 3) or they could have a person register them as a proctor. All students will be given support in preparing for the test and Kaplan will be responsible for analyzing any data and identifying any common items that need to be mastered and will adjust their instruction to meet those needs, and any additional remedial support will be provided by Kaplan for any student that needs to be retested.

Dr. Young said there are two parts to this proposal. The Virtual Innovative School that the state defines as a school where students are educated 80% or more on-line. This would be a third school in the district that would not be Hadley Elementary or Hopkins Academy, but would be a third school. The Planning Committee would like to continue the charge to explore the idea of a fourth school within a school at Hopkins Academy. A virtual school would begin to access college courses and things you would take within the virtual school. By having a partnership with Kaplan it would allow us to bring those on-line college courses into a virtual innovative school at Hopkins. We'd become a very attractive site for students through a school choice program. If students go from the school choice program into a school within a school, meaning that they had a blended model where they spent part of their day taking courses in a brick and mortar, with part of their day taking college courses at home, they would fall into another innovative school design and the costs that would follow those students (money follows students in education) would be \$9,700 per student rather than \$5,000. This model would allow us to expand opportunities for Hadley students that were interested in virtual school, it would form a partnership so we could access college courses and have the benefit of a ratio of for every 100 students in the program would result in 20 half-courses for Hopkins students free of charge.

To clarify the tuition structure, Mrs. Kelley said if someone from outside of MA wanted to attend our virtual school, the tuition would be \$6,700, but for students in MA, it's 80% of the tuition up to \$5,000. Mrs. Kelley said that if a student is from Hadley and wants to attend a virtual school fulltime, there would not be a cost to Hadley. 2% of 500 would work out to be ten students, but Kaplan will waive the enrollment fee, assuring that Hadley will not pay to have their own students attend the Hadley virtual school. However, if we go over the 2% then we would pay the tuition piece of 94% to Kaplan, but that would be offset by the tuition that was coming in. Mrs. Kelley said that we would have to have a huge number of Hadley students enrolled in the virtual school to cause a financial riff--which does not seem possible.

In response to Ms. Dunlavy's questions of needing 2% of our existing student body needing to sign up for this virtual school, Dr. Young said by law it's 25%, but Hadley will ask for a waiver down to 2%, adding parents from Hadley have already been calling to make inquiries. Dr. Young said the only other budgetary item he felt needed addressing was like any public school the program would be offered free of charge to parents, but for those students who want to access college courses they have to pay the full cost of that college course (\$1,200-\$1,800); however, under this arrangement, a student could take a college course for \$100 per credit. Therefore, the Virtual Planning Committee, after discussion, felt the requests would be that for students that had economic challenges, free and reduced lunch and other "need" indicators, that those costs would be covered by money earned from tuitions. No student will be disenfranchised in this option. Again noting, that for every 100 FTE students in the Virtual School, we'd have 20 courses that could be traded up for college courses for the additional \$100 fee that covers the registration cost and maintaining of the records. Finally, Dr. Young reminded everyone that the colleges that were contacted said they would accept these credits.

Chairman Waskiewicz thanked the Virtual Innovative Planning Committee for their hard work and well prepared presentation. He also thanked Mr. Nick Grabbe, Gazette Reporter, for the press coverage given to this subject in the week leading up to the meeting, adding it was very thorough with great coverage.

At this point, Chairman Waskiewicz as for comments from the School Committee members and then said he would open it up to the audience.

Ms. Dunlavy said it sounds very cool; but had three primary concerns. Knowing that Hadley would like to attract high achievers and yet her understanding of school choice law is that Hadley can't pick and choose, leaving her with a concern on the impact on MCAS scores and AYP where funding could be affected, noting that we are already a very high achieving school. If we do not continue to be a high-achieving school we potentially lose funding, adding that she believes our high MCAS scores is a reason why we are a School Choice winner and worries that the Virtual School will, according to the targeted population in the proposal, try to attract dropouts or near dropouts. Ms. Dunlavy says she cares about dropouts but it is her responsibility to care more about the Hadley kids and the Hadley schools. Dr. Young said he would comment briefly on that and said the Planning Committee looked at that and almost took it out, but Hadley has some students now in Hopkins Academy that are accessing these kinds of programs through Plato. This opportunity could deal with some of our own internal issues. Ms. Dunlavy again expressed her concern for maintaining our high MCAS and AYP scores.

Another concern of Ms. Dunlavy's is having Dr. Young act as the principal since he already has a big job as the superintendent. It is her understanding from the Greenfield Schools that they have a full-time principal overseeing their Virtual School and it is a fulltime job and she wants Dr. Young as the full-time superintendent of our schools, not as a principal of the new school. Her read of the proposal will have him responsible for weekly meetings with the teachers, weekly check-ins with the students and weekly meetings with Kaplan and the teachers. Mrs. Dunlavy wanted Dr. Young to explain how he would fit all this in and how long he intended to serve as the launch principal.

Ms. Dunlavy's third concern is looking at what's coming into Hadley based on state law right now we could have 500 kids in the school, generating revenue of \$150,000. Once our superintendent is no longer a launch principal and Hadley hires a fulltime principal, with a salary around \$90,000 plus benefits, putting it around \$120,000, so then the financial gain is much more limited than \$150,000 a year.

Dr. Young said he would comment on the second and third concern since they seem to meld together. Kaplan would take on the full principal responsibilities if we needed them to, but the reason that it made sense from his vantage point was to retain that oversight while we are getting into new territory, feeling we need to be able to make adjustments if needed with staffing issues and other concerns that may arise. Kaplan would marry-up and administrator to work with us but in his opinion, at least for the first year or so, we need to maintain a weekly meeting where we are reviewing all these fundamentals just to make

sure we are clear on exactly what's going on from a curricular, staffing, and programming kind of perspective. Dr. Young said we can turn over that responsibility down the road if it makes sense to do so, but given the need to be cautious as we go forward, he believes that for at least a year, if not two, admitting they might be difficult years, but he believes it's the way to protect the district. Dr. Young admitted it's always challenging to take on more work, but feels it's necessary to protect the district and be able to have oversight. Ms. Grant wondered if this isn't an argument for a new principal hired by Hadley to oversee this? Mrs. Kelley said she feels that because this is new, she would like somebody tried and true that understands the Hadley system, understands the expectations, etc., having Ms. Grant interject, she agrees. With Mrs. Kelley adding she is far more comfortable having our superintendent in control. Again, Ms. Grant says she agrees, but believes we need someone on our payroll answerable to us, her worry is that we are giving too much control to a third party with our name and reputation. Mrs. Kelley said we will have someone on our payroll overseeing this. Ms. Grant said this was a focus of bringing revenue into the district, but if we start having personnel problems, what happens to the revenue. Mrs. Kelley said then you renegotiate what the percentage is that your taking per student, adding right now we are at 6 %, which is twice what Greenfield is getting, but we would renegotiate if we took on more administrative oversight on our end, we would not pay Kaplan the same amount of money. Dr. Young said after year three you could start to fade away administrative support from Kaplan, fade away any kinds of services to reduce costs. However, we do not have the core competencies, yet, to fade away some of those services. Adding, after three years there might be a series of areas where we say it will be more cost effective to take over those responsibilities, but we would have had three years of experience. Mrs. Kelley said she believes this is a cautious approach by not turning it all over and not have any oversight and feels this is a nice progression into this endeavor. Dr. Young said he felt confident that after three years we could reduce external costs by taking over things with our own people; adding, we have teachers who've expressed an interest in having some sort of role, but right now we are going very slowly and risk nothing.

Ms. Dunlavy said Kaplan does the advertising and the hiring and Hadley has last say over hiring, Dr. Young as principal supervises and evaluates the teachers. Dr. Young said Kaplan has somebody else that will do evaluations, but he will have the ability to intervene if necessary.

Mr. Waskiewicz said what he finds attractive about the proposal is what Mrs. Bonneville referred to when she said student needs should be #1 and would be in favor of this proposal even if there were a cost associated with it. Anything we can do to enhance learning opportunities for the students and anything we can do to reach out to the population needing alternatives, those perhaps in the 7,8, 9 and 10 grades who are just about getting through their high school experience right now, if in fact they are, could benefit and that goes beyond just making money. In terms of Dr. Young's time, Mr. Waskiewicz, said he is one of those individuals who thrive on challenges. Adding, Dr. Young is the educational leader of the Hadley Schools and it is in his job description to seek out innovative ways to expand the learning opportunities, not just to increase revenue, but meet the educational needs of the students, support of the faculty and administration staff in the buildings, and believes this is exactly what he is doing by proposing an innovative virtual school for Hadley.

Mrs. Kelley asked to comment on a point made by Jo-Ann Konieczny regarding innovation, noting that there was a long discussion regarding this term and was taken aback by Mrs. Konieczny's statement on this subject since it different from what was discussed in the planning meeting where innovative vs. virtual terminology was addressed. Mrs. Kelley said Hadley did not pick innovation for the name of the school, that comes from the state of Massachusetts, plus innovative can be described in many different ways and is currently confined by the regulations of DESE. Mrs. Kelley said she agrees that Hadley needs to look at innovative ways to teach and different ways within the brick and mortar and also on-line. This proposal enables opportunities for kids; it offers a traditional education in a different package. Mrs. Kelley said the workplace has changed over the past ten years with the advancement of technology and this could be great preparation for students.

Ms. Grant said she had to challenge the idea about cost to the district. She said there are opportunity costs in loss of Dr. Young's time, there's a potential for loss of opportunity costs regarding Mrs. Boyden, Director of Student Services. Ms. Grant said looking at the contract the requirements around sped could be significant because we do not know what population we will attract, but there are certainly costs over ESL, costs over sped, there could be technology costs. Dr. Young said the contract has been amended to have Kaplan cover the cost of computers and as far as ESL is concerned, Kaplan has to make accommodations. Dr. Young said he spoke with Jeff Wolfson of the DESE who said sped costs are the responsibility of the sending district, but Kaplan has to make accommodations and comply with federal and

state laws around special ed. Dr. Young agreed that there could be opportunity costs loss, but didn't believe it would be in special ed out of pocket costs, but Hadley would be responsible for making sure that the teams met with the sending district's team the determiner. A student enrolled in a virtual school remains duly enrolled in their sending district for the purposes of special ed as well as in the innovative school, which from a financing standpoint is interesting because, in theory, what happens is the sending district gets credit for them for the foundation budget, so that's why the monies can follow the student in the innovative school if Hadley were to host it. Dr. Young agreed that we would learn a lot over the next few years.

At this point in the public hearing, Chairman Waskiewicz opened the meeting to audience participation, which concluded at 7:15PM. Mr. Waskiewicz thanked everyone for their participation. (A full airing of this public hearing is available by contacting Hadley TV).

The Chair entertained closing comments from Committee members. Ms. Dunlavy echoed her original concerns, MCAS and AYP, stating that if MCAS scores go down we will close down the school. Her third concern was how much money this was going to make and is hearing that not all Members are looking at this as a money making opportunity but as an educational opportunity for Hadley and Massachusetts students, but doesn't address her second concern which is not wanting our superintendent to be a fulltime principal, agreeing that Dr. Young works hard and can take on a lot, but does not want him to be a fulltime principal. She wonders if the School Committee is willing to ask Dr. Young to assess the amount of time he is spending on the virtual school vs. other current Hadley Public School needs. If it's determined that the balance is too much, that there is too much time spent on the virtual school and something else is needed, is the School Committee willing to spend choice funds to hire some staffing to help move this school forward. Mrs. Kelley said she would agree that it should be analyzed and if it costs too much, then we shouldn't go forward. Mr. Michalak said he understands where Ms. Dunlavy is coming from and if in a year's period of time after talking with Dr. Young it's determined that too much time and money is needed, but Ms. Dunlavy said she did not want to wait a year, she wants it reviewed every month between now and September because there is going to be a huge amount of planning time and that's time taken away from the Hadley Public Schools and the Hadley students that we have now. If the School Committee determines, with Dr. Young tracking his time, that it's too much, she wants to know if the School Committee is willing to fund that, not after the school opens, during the planning stage. Mr. Waskiewicz said he couldn't imagine not giving Dr. Young help if he came to the School Committee and would support hiring someone. Mrs. Kelley also said if that were the situation and the Committee had to use Choice funds, then she would support it. Mr. Michalak said he was not comfortable making a decision on that right now, he would have to weight all the circumstances if and when it was presented to the Committee. Ms. Grant said that since she only had the contract over the weekend to review she was not comfortable voting on this evening and asked if Kaplan could be asked for more time. Mr. Michalak said there has been a tremendous amount of time spent researching this and discussing this over the past year and felt it was now up to the Committee to vote. Chairman Waskiewicz then called for the vote.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Vote to approve the Innovative Virtual School Implementation Plan for the Hadley Virtual Academy of Massachusetts.

MOTION: (Kelley/Michalak) move to adopt the Innovation Virtual Implementation Plan. VOTE: In favor: Kelley, Michalak, Dunlavy and Waskiewicz. Abstaining: Grant.

2. Vote on Awarding the Contract to Kaplan

MOTION: (Michalak/Kelley) move to award the contract to Kaplan for the virtual school. VOTE: In favor: Kelley, Michalak, Dunlavy and Waskiewicz. Abstaining: Grant.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

1. Hopkins Roof Replacement – Funding Source

Dr. Young reported that we received word on the Hopkins Roof Green Repair Program that we've been tracking for months. He said the state has streamlined the procurement process and we now must identify how we are going to fund our portion of the cost. MSBA will determine the actual split. Hadley

does not yet know the exact amount until we actually go through the bidding process that will be done by MSBA. Hadley will have to have a Screening Committee, but the state will provide the names for Hadley to work with. Dr. Young said he would recommend that we identify the School Choice Account as the funding source since the Committee will be asking for money from the town to purchase land. At this time, a rough estimate of \$250,000 to \$300,000 will be needed for the roof. Dr. Young believes this work could be done over the summer. The state's starting point for reimbursement is 49.23%, but they have not made the final determination on the percentage to be reimbursed.

MOTION: (Grant/Kelley) move to authorize up to \$300,000 of School Choice Funds as the funding source to be used for the Green Repair Program to replace the roof on Hopkins Academy. VOTE: Unanimous.

2. Unit A and Unit C Contracts

The contract negotiations have been completed and the language, agreed upon by the School Committee from a bargaining standpoint has resulted in a one-year increase of 2%.

MOTION: (Michalak/Dunlavy) move to approve the Unit A and Unit C one-year contract with a 2% increase. VOTE: Unanimous.

3. Request for Funding – Salary Increases

Dr. Young said calculations have been made to determine how much will be needed to fund the 2% COLA and identify the funding source since the COLAs were not built into the budget. Dr. Young noted that we've had some degree changes and other employee changes that are included in the request for \$82,000 from School Choice Funds. This covers all employees at 2% at all levels to June 30, 2011.

MOTION: (Kelley/Grant) move to transfer \$82,000 from the School Choice Account to fund salary increases for FY 2011. VOTE: Unanimous.

MOTION: (Kelley/Michalak) move to authorize the Chair, Thomas Waskiewicz, to execute the Unit A and Unit C contract. VOTE: Unanimous.

4. Preliminary FY12 School Department Budget Discussion

Dr. Young said he wanted to wait to have this brought forward and is offering this in a very preliminary way with the intent of being more thorough later on. This budget has no change except for a few minor exceptions. This budget assumes a freeze on COLAs for next year, all positions district-wide. This budget has not accounted for any requests. The only new position is a special education LPN person that has to transition for a medically involved student from preschool to kindergarten. There is a situation at Hopkins Academy where the budget does not work with a .67 teacher, and therefore, the teacher will have to be made fulltime. Dr. Young said those are the only two exceptions. Vocational education is projected to go up due to increased interest.

Dr. Young referred to page 13 of the budget showing that the town gave the school 5.3M, the extra \$100,000 was transferred in from the School Choice Funds to purchase supplies, getting us to 5.4M. This year's budget is still short approx. \$30,000 from previous adjustments that still need to be addressed. At this time, we are at a starting point for discussion of \$791,000 above a level funded budget. Ideally, Dr. Young would hopes the town will bump up the 5.3M since the school has been frozen for a very long time. The grants will have to be used to offset wherever possible, and the Committee will have to spend a portion of the incoming School Choice money to make it work. In addition to these issues the vocational is in flux and special education in flux so those two areas could tweak this up or down. At this time the Governor's budget is expected to reduce funds on the town side but not to Chapter 70. Dr. Young has heard that things will look better come April or May.

OTHER:

Reports, and/or Informational Items, etc.)

1. HES Principal Search Process would parallel searches we've done in the past. There will be a Screening Committee to start that work in the next 30 days, culminating with a public forum for all parents to be involved in rating the candidates before they meet with the School Committee. The Screening Committee will be comprised of parent representatives that have been previously elected by PTO to School Council. The union will vote on a representative and so forth. Dr. Young said he is looking to replace our retiring principal in mid-July.
2. Principal's DiPietro's letter acknowledging a donation from Mr. & Mrs. Gary Fydenkevez.

3. Hopkins Academy Librarian's letter acknowledging the gift of books and DVD's from the Hadley 350th Committee.
4. List of grant funding from the Trustees of Hopkins Academy totaling \$30,881.00 for Hopkins Academy.
5. January 1, 2011, enrollments district wide.
6. Balance sheets from July 1 to January 24, 2011

Mr. Waskiewicz noted that the Booster Club has been very supportive and they have purchased a number of uniforms and continue to arrange for the annual soccer under the lights weekend. Chairman Waskiewicz proposed the School Committee invite these supporting organizations, namely the Trustees, the Boosters, the PTO and Mothers Club, to join the School Committee at their next meeting be recognized and thanked publicly.

NEXT MEETING DATE

March 1, 2011, 5:30 PM, Hopkins Academy Music Room.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Grant/Michalak) move to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 PM. VOTE: Unanimous.