

**HADLEY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS
April 26, 2010**

5:30 PM Regular Meeting

Hopkins Academy Music Room

PRESENT: Chair: Mrs. Tracy Kelley (5:39PM), Vice Chair: Mr. James Michalak.
School Committee Members: Ms. Linda Dunlavy, Ms. Robie Grant and Mr. Tom Waskiewicz
Dr. Nicholas Young, Superintendent of Schools. Finance Committee Member, Ms. Molly Keegan, Carol Trane, Administrative Assistant, Gazette Reporter, Nick Grabbe and Walter Montani with TV5, Rene Hembrough, Kent Haake, Peg Tudryn and Joanne Konieczny.

CALL TO ORDER: Vice Chair, James Michalak, called the meeting to order at 5:33 P.M.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

MOTION: (Grant/Dunlavy) move to approve the minutes of the March 30, 2010, meeting as presented. VOTE: Unanimous.

(Members agreed to move on to Item 1 under New Business while waiting for Mrs. Kelley to arrive.)

NEW BUSINESS

Grinspoon Honorees

Dr. Young announced that this year's Grinspoon Honorees were Mr. Fred Goodhue, a teacher of Social Studies at Hopkins for the past 21 years who is retiring in June, and Mr. Jack Horrigan the Hadley School Psychologist for the past nineteen years. Both men will be honored at a dinner on April 29th at the Log Cabin.

Ms. Grant wanted to acknowledge and congratulate Mr. Goodhue's contribution to the recent student performance of "Laughing Stock".

Title IX – Incollegiate Athletics Policy Clarification

Dr. Young related that this was the latest Title IX communication from the Dept. of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR) clarifying policies that are meant to provide equal opportunities for athletes. Dr. Young assured the Committee that our schools are in compliance.

MSBA (Massachusetts School Building Authority) – Needs Survey

MSBA is doing the next round of building audits, looking at facilities. Noting, we were the recipients of an MSBA grant for work that was done during the summer of 2009 at Hopkins Academy, MSBA was not dissuaded to do another look at our facilities in other areas needing attention. Dr. Young has been told there are other resources available for physical repairs and renovations. He said in conversation with MSBA they informed him they would once again be looking at Hopkins Academy to address areas that were perhaps overlooked. While we are not sure when the results of the audit will become known, Dr. Young wanted the Committee to be aware of this new development and that it will be interesting to see where this will go. He reminded the Committee that MSBA grants are competitive. This audit will take place on May 5.

5:39 PM Mr. Michalak turned the meeting over to Mrs. Kelley who apologized for being a few minutes late.

Mr. Waskiewicz was congratulated on winning his bid for re-election, now entering his twentieth year of service to the Hadley School Committee. Mr. Waskiewicz produced his swearing in document certified by the Town Clerk.

REORGANIZATION

Chairman Kelley said that nomination were in order for the election of a new Chairperson.

MOTION: (Michalak/Dunlavy) move to nominate Thomas Waskiewicz as Chair.

VOTE: Unanimous.

Mrs. Kelley then turned the meeting over to Mr. Waskiewicz, who declared that nominations were in order for the election of a **Vice Chair/Secretary**.

MOTION: (Dunlavy/Kelley) move to nominate Jim Michalak as Vice Chair/Secretary.

VOTE: Unanimous.

Mr. Waskiewicz took a moment to recognize Tracy Kelley's year as Chair of the Committee, noting exemplary leadership.

Signers for Bills and Payroll

Mrs. Kelley, Ms. Grant, and Mr. Waskiewicz. Alternates will be Mr. Michalak and Ms. Dunlavy.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE FY'11 SCHOOL DEPARTMENT BUDGET

Dr. Young, for the record, notified the School Committee publicly and formally that the MGL requires there be a 10-day notification in the local paper prior to a public hearing and unfortunately our legal notice was only in seven days before the meeting; therefore the Public Hearing will be re-advertised and rescheduled for the next school committee meeting.

Dr. Young said what is unusual about the budgeting process this time around is the Finance Committee has not given the school department their bottom-line recommendation as they have each year in the past. For the record, Dr. Young said the proposed budget figure of \$5.3 million is the request from the town, noting this is a level services budget with two exceptions. There is a .5 FTE elementary school Adjustment Counselor position and a .67 FTE secondary Science/ Health teacher position for Hopkins Academy. The Science/Health teaching position is necessary because the schedule does not work with the increased number of students.

Dr. Young said parents are most concerned about class sizes. Again emphasizing he is tracking class sizes carefully. He continues to be uncomfortable with Grade 4, not knowing if those numbers will drop or increase, but he is setting the stage in event there is an increase in the current enrollment. Kindergarten enrollment is also uncertain so this is another area to be watched, noting a little over 30 students have already registered; however, there is a possibility of up to 10 more (as they appear on the census). Dr. Young is not opening any Choice seats in Kindergarten at this point either. While 7th Grade temporarily looks like it will be big, history would suggest that we could lose some students to private school or maybe a few students to School Choice; again mentioning he believes Grade 4 could be a problem. While he doesn't want to react too early, he will continue to monitor the numbers and report back to the School Committee.

Currently, the student/teacher ratio under this budget plan at the elementary schools is approx. 21 students per teacher. Adding, he is the first to acknowledge that the problem with averages is that some classes are smaller and some are slightly larger so what really matters is how many students are in your child's class. There are 49 students slated for 4th grade; one class of 24 and one of 25, acknowledging this is our highest. Noted also, there is one long-term elementary substitute teacher that will not be replaced in this budget. In simple terms, he is changing a 1FTE teacher for a .67 Sci/Health teacher and a .5 Adj. Counselor. This item will stay on the agenda until a final budget is agreed upon.

NEW BUSINESS**1. Review Policy KDB and KDB-R**

Dr. Young informed the Committee that their policy manuals would be collected in June to be updated. He also noted that in a 2007-2008 school year the SC went through and completed a comprehensive policy review.

The policy under discussion and review tonight is KDB-Public's Right to Know and KDB-R covered under M.G.L.c 66, S 10(a) of the Public Records Law. Dr. Young provided the Committee with a legal opinion rendered by School Attorney, Fred Dupere, noted as section 3 of his letter covering requests for public documents along with backup language from Secretary Galvin's office on suggested costs related to public records requests.

There is currently a request for five years worth of documents at the school committee level. Dr. Young noted that the meeting minutes are referenced with certain documents that become part of the official minutes as confirmed by the attorney's letter. Therefore when we get requests for complete sets we provide those complete with referenced documents, which could contain budgets, policies, or whatever the case might be that are specifically referenced. When a request is received a good faith estimate of costs must be offered since there are costs associated with printing, set at \$.20 a page for photocopies, \$.25 for microfilm or \$.50 a page for computer printouts. There is a separate cost for staff time to pull all the documents together. Taking the Committee back to their standing policy, it does not address computer printouts and should be expanded consistent with Secretary Galvin's guidelines.

Dr. Young suggested that electronic forms should be put in a format that cannot be altered, such as "read only" or pdf. Part of the challenge will be that over time there are different forms and formats, requiring staff time. Costs will also be dependent on what the requester is asking for in terms of official minutes with supporting documentation that may or may not be available electronically and will all have to be sorted out. Mr. Michalak thought this an unusual request and wondered if the person was looking for one specific thing that we could provide.

Dr. Young said we will deal with the immediate request and secondly he will revise the policy for further action.

OTHER (Reports, and/or Information Items, etc.)

- **Equestrian Team Update** – The School Committee voted to support two of our students at the national competition in Atlanta, GA., and Dr. Young was pleased to report that one of our students came in second at nationals and the other student had an excellent showing as well, but did not place. The Hopkins Academy Equestrian Team represented its school in fine fashion.
- **PV Chinese Immersion Charter School Visit and Tour**-Dr. Young reported meeting with Mr. Tian and Ms. Huang of Wuhan, China the afternoon of April 26th. Mr. Tian was akin to our Commissioner of Education and Ms. Huang was the Principal of the Foreign Language School in Wuhan, China that has a couple of thousand students many of whom want to come to the United States as part of their studies. The PV Immersion Charter School administrators again expressed their interest in continuing discussions on possible joint programming that was stalled at the DESE level wanting more justification for the first-ever relationship between a public school and a charter school. Dr. Young had occasion to discuss this with the Commissioner of Education who admitted that the laws did not allow for any pollination between charter schools and public schools, especially around funding and the exchange of money and staffing. That said, Dr. Young said there has been much discussion about sharing of programming and resources and administrative costs that it may make sense to continue to pursue this partnership in some form. Dr. Young noted that at some point there could be a request for a Home Rule Petition requesting a special exception to the laws to create some sort of a partnership.
- **Revised 2010-2011 School Calendar** Copies of the revised calendar were made available. Dr. Young noted that Thursday Night there is an Anti-Bullying Program at the elementary school. This relates to the school calendar in that the state is moving forward with mandated programming for anti-bullying and he believes this will be a piece added to our health curriculum, perhaps not that dissimilar to what is already in place. Since this is an extraordinarily serious and important topic, Dr. Young would like the opening of school speaker to address anti-bullying for staff and with the consent of the SC, he would like to arrange a program to coincide with Open House since these are well attended in Hadley. Parents could be asked to come 45 minutes to an hour earlier and have a presentation on anti-bullying as part of Open House. There admittedly are some drawbacks, but the participation at Open House is the best chance to capture the largest audience.
- **Annual Reports**-The Committee received copies of the administrators' annual report to the Town, along with the report of the School Committee.
- **Reminder-Annual Town Meeting – May 6, 2010 at 7:00 PM**
- **Spring Concerts – Hopkins May 9th Elementary May 27th**
- **Collaborative Representative** – Ms. Dunlavy said the Collaborative for Educational Services reported that Hadley is in need of a School Committee Member to serve on their board. Dr. Young said Mr. Michalak has been our member, but now that the SC has reorganized a new member

could be selected. When asked how many meeting this involves, Dr. Young estimated perhaps six to eight a year with other meetings as they are called. Ms. Dunlavy wondered if the School Committee could take turns, depending on who was available. Dr. Young also agreed to serve as an alternate in the event no one could attend. He noted that this is not unique to Hadley since attendance has dropped off when the Collaborative was dealing with others issues not related directly to the schools. Dr. Young will notify the Collaborative of the School Committee's decision to share responsibilities along with having the superintendent serve as their alternate.

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, May 25, 2010, at 6:30 PM, Hopkins Academy Music Room.

EXECUTIVE OF SESSION

MOTION: (Kelley/Michalak) Enter into Executive Session for the purpose of strategy planning with respect to Collective Bargaining with Unit A and Unit C. And further, the Committee will not reconvene in Regular Session at the conclusion of the Executive Session.

Chairman Waskiewicz asked for a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote: Michalak, yes; Grant, yes; Dunlavy, yes; and Kelley, yes and Waskiewicz, yes.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: (Michalak/Kelley) move to adjourn the regular meeting at 6:33 PM. VOTE: Unanimous.