

**HADLEY SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS  
August 31, 2010**

**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. Finance Committee Member, Molly Keegan, Carol Trane, Administrative Assistant, and TV5's Walter Montania, along with Scott Payne and Rene Hembrough.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Waskiewicz, called the meeting to order at 5:31 P.M.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**MOTION: (Michalak/Grant) move to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2010 Regular Session School Committee Meeting, VOTE: Unanimous.**

**CONTINUING BUSINESS**

**1. HES Staffing and Enrollment Figures**

Dr. Young provided the Committee with the most recent enrollment figures for the elementary school along with a breakdown sheet of student teacher ratios in kindergarten to grade six. Dr. Young noted that the average class size is 18 to 19 students, except in 5<sup>th</sup> grade where the ratio is currently at 23-24 per classroom. He believes this is still in the acceptable range; adding he would like to come back and talk to the Committee about this grade at a subsequent meeting. While he does not believe this class should be split into three classrooms, he does believe there's a need for some sort of tutorial program for some students.

The enrollment at Hopkins is 306 students.

**2. Medicaid Program**

Chairman Waskiewicz reported that he had sent a letter to Selectboard Chairman, Dan Dudkiewicz, in summary saying the SC thanked them for their efforts in the discussion regarding the Medicaid reimbursement topic and that the SC voted unanimously at their meeting on June 21 to propose that funds be split evenly (50/50) between the Hadley School Department and the Town of Hadley.

Mr. Waskiewicz said he was informed by Mr. Dudkiewicz that the SC proposal would be discussed by the BOS at their next meeting scheduled for Sept. 1. However, Mrs. Kelley felt that it is easier to start back on the program at the beginning of a school year and proposed that the school department start collecting the money and then negotiate with the BOS at a later time on how to split the money, whether it be a 50/50 or 60/40 or a 70/30 split, whatever it may be. Mrs. Kelley said she feels very strongly that the school should get a portion of the money collected since the school is the one expending its resources and staff. Mrs. Kelley said she is proposing this in good faith in hopes that the Selectboard and the Finance Committee will negotiate an equitable distribution, recognizing that the school does put in substantial effort into filing for this money and again stressed that she believed this will be negotiated in good faith. Ms. Grant added that she did not think that the request for a 50/50 split should be abandoned; however she did support the commitment to once again secure the Medicaid funds and negotiate with the town later, adding that she had attended many of the meetings where this was discussed and didn't feel like there was opposition to splitting the money with the schools.

**MOTION:(Kelley/Grant) move to re-institute the Medicaid reimbursement program and continue to pursue a 50/50 split of collected funds with the town through the Board of Selectmen. VOTE: Unanimous.**

**3. Warrant Articles for Fall Town Meeting-Oct. 28, 2010**

Dr. Young reported he has two warrant articles as discussed back in June. There is a need to request the replacement of a school bus. The estimated costs for a 71-passenger bus is between \$85,000 and \$90,000.

The second warrant article pertains to the 7.98 acres behind the Hopkins playing field and now owned by the Hopkins Academy Board of Trustees. The price tag on this property is \$205,000, which is actually what they had paid plus general expenses they had incurred over that twenty-year period which is in Dr. Young's opinion, a gift of sorts to the Town. Therefore, the \$205,000 warrant article could be reduced by CPA funding, if available; explaining that the Community Preservation Act Committee in Hadley is chaired by Mr. Joe Fitzgibbon, who he met with several times over the summer. Dr. Young publicly thank Mr. Fitzgibbon for his time. Dr. Young submitted an application for funding and will have a meeting with the CPA Committee sometime in September. Dr. Young noted that there is no chance that the entire \$205,000 could not be funded from CPA funds because they do not have that kind of money, but is hoping for some modest amount from CPA funding to offset the purchase price. Dr. Young noted that CPA funding was being sought to allow for possible use of CPA funding in the future to help with developing the playing fields. If CPA funding is not involved in the purchase of the land, then CPA funding cannot be accessed later on. There is also the hope that once the land is purchased and plans are complete for the development of more playing fields, the state has funds for recreation that can be applied for, but Hadley cannot go after these funds at this point because we do not have possession of the property.

4. **Athletic Field Renovation Project** – Dr. Young updated the Committee by reminding them the SC endorsed the field renovation project approx. one year ago since the timing was critical with regards to impacting the fields. The timeline was developed, alternate plans made to relocate the soccer teams and the field is being stripped of the roaming weed and will be treated for the grub problem over the Labor Day weekend. To be discussed at a later date is the problem of irrigation since we do not have water available to irrigate the fields.

Mr. Michalak acknowledged the work being done on the field, but urged the need to maintain the field with some type of program once the field has been refurbished.

**ANNOUNCEMENT: Chairman Waskiewicz announced that the Booster Club will hold their Soccer Under the Lights over Columbus Day Weekend, starting on Thursday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at the Hadley Elementary School. (This location is being used due to the Hopkins Field renovation.)**

5. **CPA Funding Request** – Discussion included in Items 3 and 4 above.

6. **Anti-Bullying Program** – Dr. Young said the school is trying to communicate the seriousness and significance of this program. The opening day of school with teachers was spent on an anti-bullying program of which there are several parts. The first part is the training of employees, which has actually occurred. Dr. Arthur Friedman will be the trainer for all the different elements in this comprehensive program. The next phase will be delivered at Open House for parents. A third part of the program will involve students in two parts: one will be an anti-bullying training for students the other has yet to be determined. Another piece of the program will address a state mandated plan and on-line training requirement. A policy proposal will be developed for SC approval in the near future. Dr. Young noted that the School Councils will be involved in developing the plan as encouraged by DESE. Ms. Grant would like information made available on the school's website, with appropriate links.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Administrative Goals – 2010-2011 Academic Year**

Chairman Waskiewicz complimented Dr. Young on the impressive list of lofty goals totaling 50 in number.

Dr. Young said goals are seeking to capture the input of teachers, of school councils that includes parents, community members and some school committee members to have a unifying set of goals to pursue. While he categorized some as one thousand feet up in terms of things dealing with curriculum yet others are a foot off the ground in terms of dealing with things that are specific to kids in the classrooms.

Dr. Young highlighted a number of goals, all of which are filed with and made a part of these minutes.

Of note is the search process to hire a new elementary principal; work through contract negotiations with Unit A and Unit C; fulfill several professional development mandates from the state; more serious discussion on virtual innovative schools; look at ways to seek competitive funding like the MSBA program that will be discussed further along in this meeting; and review curriculum areas slated for attention in the current year. Dr. Young noted that the only way you maintain a comprehensive PreK-12 curriculum is to review content areas on a regular basis and cycle. This year the focus will be on the Arts and Health, noting that this is an opportune time to review the Health curriculum and incorporate any anti-bullying information as needed.

The CPA funding goal is a work in progress with hopes for funding in the current fiscal year; revisit the District's Capital Plan; professional development plans to update for the staff; implement new state requirements for tracking personnel and developing our data warehouse to be able to track not only personnel information but better track student information. Develop protocols and work through a policy with the SC on anti-bullying; look at a mentoring program at the high school; look at a Middle School Tolerance Team involving student leadership; look at a career fair at Hopkins; examine Honors Courses vs. Lever 1 with AP; and address the goals related the NEASC in the areas identified by the Visiting Team. This report gave a time span of 10 years to address their recommendations, but Hadley has been breaking them down and run with them the best we can.

Dr. Young explained that Hadley has been in a three-year project around English Language Learners (ELL) and will try to get through Category 3, and launch further into Category 4. This will require professional development.

On page 5 of the goals Dr. Young outlined specific genres of literature as assigned to their grade level, noting he will show the SC at their next meeting the new literature series; work on writing improvement, noting he would like to add a couple of things like enhancing our Robotic's Program at Hopkins where we have one class being taught by our Technology teacher, Mr. Simmons. Lastly, continue to explore if there could be some sort of relationship with the Chinese Charter School located in Hadley.

In response to Mr. Scott Payne's inquiry about the Robotic's Program, Dr. Young responded that it is in its infancy and he welcomed anyone who had experience or recommendations for the Program to please contact him.

Also in response to Ms. Grant's inquiry about the Elem. Principal's search, Dr. Young responded that it is a bit early to assemble a Search Committee. He believed the School Councils would be involved first starting in January, teachers will be involved, etc. Dr. Young said he will present a plan in late fall, laying out timelines and procedures, adding anyone in the community that wants a role will have one because the initial screening committee will present finalists at public meetings where everybody will have an opportunity to meet the candidates. Again saying he envisions advertising in February, do interviews in March, do site visits, and have someone hired by April to start when Mr DiPietro retires either in mid to late July.

## **2. HES School Improvement Plan**

Members received Mr. DiPietro's Elementary School Improvement Plan. Dr. Young reminded the SC that this no longer required their approval; however he provides the Plan for their review and information. Dr. Young said the plan deals with the states need for numbers, MCAS results. The Improvement Plan deals with performance improvement mapping, using steps to determine what areas to focused on relative to the curriculum in order to improve test scores. Dr. Young said he will address the test scores at a later date, but was pleased with the elementary scores except for last year's fourth grade students, and specifically a modest number of those students and that is why he believes there is a need for intervention and remediation.

## **3. Green Communities Designation for the Town of Hadley**

SC Members received a packet of information from Select Board Member, Brian West, requesting the SC adopt a fuel-efficient vehicle purchasing policy that will allow Hadley to become a Green Community Designate. Dr. Young said it is his understanding that this provides the town the ability to pursue grant resources by adopting the Fuel Efficient Vehicle Policy. However, Dr. Young reminded the SC that he mentioned earlier that buses are exempt from this policy; adding the school dept. has predominantly buses, but may one day down the road purchase a vehicle for custodial use, then this policy would impact the purchase.

Mr. Nixon added that the Town believes there will be another round of funding and the adoption of this policy will put the Town in line to apply. Mr. Nixon also reviewed the other criteria the Town will have to meet some of which have already been achieved.

Each SC member received a complete packet of information, along with the five areas of criteria to be addressed by the Town.

**MOTION: (Kelley/Michalak) move to adopt the fuel efficient vehicle purchasing policy as part of the criteria necessary toward achieving the Green Communities Designation for the Town of Hadley.**

**VOTE: Unanimous.**

## **4. MSBA Green Repair Program**

Dr. Young warned that what he was about to present could cost them money and become a spring town meeting warrant article request. There is money available through MSBA (Massachusetts

School Building Authority) specifically in our case to replace roofs, adding we know that we have two roofs that need to be replaced, both were done 1989, putting it way past its life span; adding, we have been making repairs but know we have to find a way to replace it this year if possible and the MSBA grant funding may be the means to help us do it. The second area needing attention at our high school is the locker rooms, but Dr. Young said we are still waiting to find out if we could qualify for any repair project money next spring. Therefore, Dr. Young said what we do know is by applying for MSBA Green Repair Program funds we will not disqualify ourselves from applying for other repair funds in the future to deal with particular projects; adding whether or not we would get funded is another whole set of questions, but it is always better to be prepared. If the School Committee is comfortable, he will apply for this competitive grant and if awarded we would get a percentage of reimbursement, perhaps the same percentage as we did in the past, that being 49.23% as the baseline, going up to 52%. If we use 50% as a discussion point, and were awarded the grant, then the SC would discuss how to fund the balance-or their 50%, by perhaps by asking for the funds at the spring town meeting or whatever the SC wanted to do at that time. In response to how much it may cost, Dr. Young gave only a rough estimate of between \$300,000 to \$400,000 depending on whether or not there is any structural damage.

School Committee member all expressed their support, hoping the roof replacement would allow for even greater energy savings now that we have replaced the windows and installed new boilers. There being no further discussion, Chairman Waskiewicz called for a motion.

**MOTION: (Dunlavy/Kelley) made and seconded to resolve that the Hadley School Committee having convened in open session on August 31, 2010, and in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Nicholas D. Young, to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest to be dated following the Board of Selectmen's meeting on September 15, 2010, for Hopkins Academy, the town's secondary school covering grades 7-12, located at 131 Russell Street, Hadley, MA, which SOI describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category for which Hadley may be invited to apply to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future, namely, the repair and replacement of the 1989 roof on the East Wing and West Wing of the Hopkins Academy Building. And Further, specifically acknowledge that by submitting this Statement of Interest, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the Town of Hadley to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority. VOTE: Unanimous.**

##### **5. Trip to Quebec, Canada**

Chairman Waskiewicz read a request from French teacher, Marilyn Robert, requesting permission to take a group of Hopkins students on a trip to Quebec, Canada, in February; specifically Feb. 3, 4, and 5<sup>th</sup>. Members received a detailed itinerary and cost breakdown of the trip. Mr. Waskiewicz noted that the prior trip, taken in 2009, was a great success, with Mr. Michalak concurring.

**MOTION: (Grant/Michalak) move to approve the proposed trip to Quebec, Canada, scheduled for February 3, 4, and 5, 2011, as outlined in a trip itinerary provided by Ms. Robert. VOTE: Unanimous.**

##### **ADDENDUM – Update on State and Federal Grants**

Dr. Young provided the Committee with a single sheet listing state and federal grants, showing where the funds are being spent. Grants total \$417,602. Dr. Young said this is a very early figure and believes there will be more monies coming, adding there are different competitive proposals out and others pending with hopes of additional funding. Dr. Young reminded the members that the IDEA grant that list teachers' salaries, 9% must be deducted and returned to cover Mass. Teachers Retirement expenses.

In the news lately are grants entitled Educational Jobs Funding that may have Hadley eligible for up to \$57,584. These funds are designed predominantly to bring back professional staff that were laid off; however, that wasn't the issue in this district since we didn't have any layoffs. Dr. Young said he believes that salary increases is another way that these funds can be use and will have this verified since there is a limited scope for the use of these funds.

Race to the Top Funding – Dr. Young said it appears Hadley will qualify for approx. \$34,922, but are waiting on guidelines for these funds as well. We qualified because we moved forward last Jan. or Feb. with a written memorandum of understanding between the School Committee and the teachers union and the superintendent agreeing to certain criteria that had to be fulfilled to secure those funds. A lot of that had

to do with connecting student test data to teacher evaluations. We said we would engage those monies when they materialize with conversations with the union about the criteria.

#### **OTHER:**

##### **Reports, and/or Informational Items, etc.)**

1. Mass. DESE letter Re: Hadley's Highly Qualified Teacher goal of 100%.  
In answer to the question, what makes a teacher highly qualified, Dr. Young responded that the No Child Left Behind Act established criteria teachers are required to fulfill in order to be considered highly qualified. That they have fulfilled examination requirements, or had a substantial amount of professional development within their particular content areas, and or, with our younger teachers in particular that they have a masters degree in their content area vs. a generalized masters. Example: a veteran teacher with a masters in secondary education, which was typical ten years ago, would now have to have a masters degree in mathematics to teach math and become highly qualified. There was a provision allowing a teacher to achieve a highly qualified status by getting enough professional development points to show mastery in their content area. Hadley went through a comprehensive process to bring everyone up to speed, one way or another, allowing for the district to meet the 100% highly qualified distinction.

2. Mr. DiPietro's August 30th letter to parents, providing them with the MCAS' adequate yearly progress data. MCAS data will be reviewed in a more comprehensive way at a later meeting.

3. Mass. Cue article "Adopting and Promoting Technology in Schools: The Role of Educational Administrators"

4. August 2010 The School Administrator "In Consolidation Debate, Who Decides Children's Best Interests?" by Nicholas D. Young and Farshid Hajir  
Chairman Waskiewicz both congratulated and applauded Dr. Young for continuing to be leader not only amongst superintendents by virtue of his leadership role throughout the state, but he is also a leader in his field of psychology and overall education. Dr. Young recently authored two articles: one appearing in MassCue dealing with technology and The School Administrator on the continuing debate of school consolidation, copies of which were included for SC review.

5. Information re: Open Meeting Law changes

6. New Hires – Members received information on all new hires. They are: Mary Gorman, Hopkins Middle School English and Social Studies Teacher (Grade 7); John Pastorello, Fourth Grade Teacher; Alexandra Milardo, Elem. Special Ed Para; Lindsey Gouvin, .57 Secondary Social Science and Health Teacher; Melinda Zmaczynski, who taught with us previously has returned as a P/T Preschool Teacher; Carol Wood, .5FTE Elem. School Adj. Counselor; Roseanna Stone, .65FTE Elem LPN; Alison Stacy, Elem. Sped Teacher; Amelia Paterson, Secondary Sped Para; Andrew Moffet, Secondary Sped Para; Emily MacDonald, .7FTE Preschool Para; Jeffrey Mish, Secondary Sped Para; Jonathan Sicard, Secondary Social Studies Teacher. Dr. Young also welcomed back Mrs. Tara Bernier who spent last year on a leave of absence.

7. Balance sheets to August 31, 2010 (available at the meeting)

8. Mr. Waskiewicz informed the Committee that Dr. Young has been invited to be the guest speak with all expenses paid at an International Educator's Conference to be held in late October in Abu Dhabi, UAE.,

##### **NEXT MEETING DATE**

October 4, 2010, 5:30 PM, Hopkins Academy Music Room

##### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION: (GRANT/MICHALAK)** move to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of strategy planning with respect to Collective Bargaining with Unit A and Unit C, and further state by conducting the business in open session will have a detrimental effect on the public body's negotiating position. The Committee will not reconvene in Regular Session at the conclusion of the Executive Session.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:** Waskiewicz \_\_ Yes \_\_, Michalak \_\_ Yes \_\_, Grant \_\_ Yes \_\_, Dunlavy \_\_ Yes \_\_, and Kelley \_\_ Yes \_\_.

##### **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION: (Michalak/Kelley)** move to adjourn the meeting at 7:01 PM. **VOTE: Unanimous.**