

**HADLEY SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS 01035  
Minutes October 22, 2018 HA Cafe**

**5:30 PM**

***Hadley Public Schools – We are guided by the mission to provide a safe and supportive environment that fosters cooperation, critical thinking, creativity, and integrity; and educating students to contribute positively to a global society.***

**Call to Order/Members Present 5:30 p.m.**

Klesch called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. members present: Klesch, Fasihuddin, Phifer, Brugger, Shannon.

**Record of Votes**

- Approval of AP warrants submitted in September 2018- Shannon moves; Phifer seconds. Vote: 5-0-1.
- Approval of September 24, 2018 Minutes- Shannon moves; Fasihuddin seconds. Vote: 5-0-0.
- Approval of warrants submitted in September 2018- Brugger moves; Phifer seconds. Vote: 5-0-0.
- Approval of Nature's Classroom Trip – Fasihuddin moves; Brugger seconds. Vote: 5-0-0.
- Approval of Hartsbrook School- Shannon moves; Phifer seconds. Vote: 5-0-0
- Approval of district Strategy/ superintendent goals 2018-19- Phifer moves; Shannon seconds. Vote: 5-0-0.
- Graduation Date for Hopkins Academy- Fasihuddin moves; Phifer seconds, Vote 5-0-0.
- PVCICS draft letter of nonsupport of expansion from School Committee- Fasihuddin moves, Phifer seconds. Vote: 5-0-0.

Klesch welcomed everyone to the October 22, 2018 School Committee Meeting and asked for a motion to open the meeting. Fasihuddin so moved. Phifer seconded and the motion was approved Vote: 5-0-0. Klesch said there would be an adjustment to the agenda, moving the executive session to the end of the meeting so the committee could move forward with presentations. McKenzie said the executive session would not take place on this date as more information was needed.

**Presentations 5:35 pm**

**Nature's Classroom- Susan Duncan**

Ms. Duncan was present to inform the committee of the upcoming Middle School Nature's Classroom Trip in June and request approval for the trip. She informed the committee that they would be returning to the same site in Maine that they visited last year. She provided the committee member with the curriculum and activity program that would be followed for the trip. McKenzie said she appreciated the time and detailed considerations the middle school team put into aligning the

curriculum with the trip. With there being no further questions, Fasihuddin made a motion to approve the Nature's Classroom trip. Brugger seconded and the motion passed 5-0-0.

#### **MCAS and District Accountability 5:40 pm**

McKenzie said she would provide an overview of the MCAS performance data and that the individual school building principals would present their individual reports on building plans and priorities. She mentioned that some of the data was sent in her weekly email and noted that parents are able to obtain all of the detailed information on the DESE website. McKenzie informed the committee that this was a new assessment based on a recently revised curriculum framework and that it would take time for the results to stabilize. McKenzie provided specific performance details by subject and grade. She reviewed each grade and how they compared percentage wise to the state averages in meeting or exceeding standards. The committee was provided detailed graphical information comparing scores by year and cohort. She also provided data for ELA, Math, and Science. McKenzie explained some of the issues with the different questioning methods presented to the students and how adjustments in instructional methods would be discussed to better prepare students for this type of testing questions.

McKenzie provided information as to how schools are rated for accountability. Hadley Elementary exceeded the target in English/ Language Arts and in Science, Math, and ELA, the target was met. McKenzie explained the criteria for chronic absenteeism and noted that it included all absences over 18 days, whether excused or not. This could pose a problem for Hadley and other schools as some students are absent for extended periods for illness or family trips/ engagements. Students do keep up with their school work but there is still a penalty to the school data.

At Hopkins high school, the data showed that ELA exceeded achievement target, math met target, and science exceeded target. McKenzie further explained the criteria for graduation and drop out rate and how changes in as little as one student affected Hadley because it is such a small school. Middle School Science scores declined from the previous year, met their English/ language arts growth target, and stayed the same in their math cohort.

McKenzie concluded with an overall percentage report per district, HES, HA, and middle school and outlined the areas to celebrate as the aggregate performance at the elementary school, high school achievement, and with focus toward improvement in mathematics districtwide, science in grade 8, and the middle school achievement.

Klesch asked if the middle school scores impacted enrollment. McKenzie responded that she had not heard that from any parents she has spoken to. She said most parents were looking for a positive overall school experience that is offered at Hadley. She added that these test scores are just one factor in evaluating the school's performance. McKenzie said that although the MASC data would not be ignored, it would not be the defining data of our schools. Klesch commented on the new questioning/ response methods for testing and said there could be a positive side to that with students not always being presented with black and white, right and wrong. The ability to choose the best answer is a good critical thinking strategy and exercise. Shannon asked if there was a point where it would be advantageous for superintendents and school committees to question the format of the test. McKenzie responded that the Secretary of Education did stress that schools need to give the new testing and

curriculums some time and then take another look. She added that superintendents have ongoing conversations with the state regarding test issues.

#### **HES School Strategy Document- Ms. Jennifer Dowd, Principal 6:00 pm**

Ms. Dowd thanked everyone for helping make her transition to principal of HES so smooth and successful. She informed the committee that she had met with all staff and reviewed parents' surveys in preparation for developing her school strategy. For instructional leadership, Dowd said she has the goal of continuing to review and revise curriculum to ensure rigor, relevance and alignment to state standards, creating current detailed curriculum maps for social studies and science that align with state standards. She added that the teachers would be provided the resources and time needed to complete this work. Curriculum maps will be shared with parents so that they can have a better understanding of instruction of their children. Continued review of data, using FAST testing, MAP testing and MASC results, in ELA in math will provide teachers and families with information about their children regarding learning strengths and weaknesses. In the area of Management and Operations, Ms. Dowd said her vision is to implement systems of support that meet the needs for all students through increased PBIS, Schoolwide Hawks Wings initiatives, and Steps to Respect. Multi-Tiered systems of support for academic achievement will continue in reading and math. For Family and community engagement, Ms. Dowd said she plans to strengthen communication and participation around special events and curriculum information. The PTO and School Council will support these endeavors. Ms. Dowd also mentioned her monthly Principal's Message as a communication tool. In the area of Professional Culture, Ms. Dowd wants to improve the effectiveness of data teams through professional development and regular meetings to analyze the impact of interventions on student behavior and achievement. She told the committee that 2 progress monitoring days had been added to the data meetings. Also planned are collection and analyzing of SWISS behavior data and providing grade level and professional development days for staff.

Klesch thanked Ms. Dowd for a thorough and informative report and asked if the School committee could do anything in addition to the parent surveys to support HES initiatives. Fasihuddin commented that she was pleased to see that curriculum maps would be updated and shared with parents. Brugger commented positively with the idea of sharing information with parents in newsletters and curriculum maps. She also said she loved the idea of a spirit week and engaging HES with HA on different occasions as it serves as an exciting anticipatory tool for HES students to look forward to attending HA. Shannon asked how the special education element would fit into the grade level meetings and how communications would be implemented between special education staff and regular education staff. Ms. Dowd responded that Ms. Haywood, Special Education Administrator may be addressing these issues in more detail during her impending presentation, but stated that she would make sure that special education teachers were provided time to fully participate in grade level meetings. Ms. Haywood said she will have the special educators involved from the beginning with the development of the curriculum maps so that modifications and accommodations needed for our special education students will be incorporated. Ms. Brugger complimented the leadership team for being so supportive of each other in their commitment to the HPS schools and students.

### **HA School Strategy (6:15pm) Mr. Brian Beck, HA Principal**

Mr. Beck said he used information for his strategy plan from sources such as, MCAS scores, behavioral data, input from students and parents through surveys and in-person conversations, student council, school council, the results of school committee surveys and the dissemination report from NEASC. In Instructional Leadership, his first goal is to improve middle school math and science MCAS growth and achievement scores. HA is taking a new approach with the help of HA new math department chair, Susan Horowitz and her math department colleagues. The focus is on how students learn mathematics. HA will be increasing MCAS like practice testing and computer testing so that students will have a comfort and familiarity level with the testing format and learn how to approach solving a math problem. Mr. Beck said HA would be using the FAST Progress monitoring tool and engaging in conversations about how problems were solved. In science, Mr. Beck said HA would use interim assessments to gain information about student knowledge of science vocabulary, what understanding of science terms have been completed at HES, and what would be needed as students transition to the middle school. In the area of Management and Operations, Mr. Beck said it is fortunate that the resources are available for the implementation of a civic engagement and dialogue project to prepare our students to become effective and productive citizens and leaders. Topics such as racism and sexism have been logistical models and a foundation for this project intended to improve climate and culture. Mr. Beck informed the committee that a grant had been obtained from the Novo foundation with the specific goal of implementing a civic engagement and dialogue process. He went on to describe the logistics of how the grant would be implemented to include civil discourse discussion sessions.

The area of family and community engagement will include the organization and implementation of an annual career fair event helping students connect their educational foundation to their ultimate career goals and post-secondary education, to include visiting alumni and various practitioners. The school council will play a role in outreach. Work is being completed on school wide academic expectations for students to be effective learners in the 21<sup>st</sup> century with an objective to have it concluded by January. Tools needed to measure the expectations will then be identified and shared.

Klesch commented on the positive aspects of the proposed career fair. Fasihuddin asked if the career fair would commence next October. Beck responded yes. Brugger advocated that 6<sup>th</sup> graders be invited to the career fair as well and suggested that other events be planned whereby 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders would gain more exposure to the positive aspects of HA, helping them make a more informed decision regarding their secondary education. Mr. Beck said he would work with the School Council toward that goal. Shannon asked Mr. Beck how he planned to address issues that were brought up in the parent survey, such as communication to parents regarding curriculum, student safety, and athletes vs. non athletes recognition. Mr. Beck responded that the social-emotional learning grant targets student safety and that there has been a significant amount of work around the logistics of school safety personnel and protocols for a variety of safety drills. Mr. Beck expanded on all of the protocols and plans that are in place to address conflicts. He added that the curriculum would be a district document to be shared publicly once completed. Mr. Beck agreed that there is a wide and diverse talent pool at HA and encouraged parents and students to share their accomplishments outside of school.

### **Special Education Priorities- Ms. Pam Haywood, Special Education Director (6:35 pm)**

Haywood stressed to the committee that she was committed to make sure that all students, regardless of their disability, have the opportunity to progress in all academic areas. Ms. Haywood explained

methods of data collection and progress monitoring of special needs students through FAST. She said that if services and instruction are aligned and coordinated to address student needs and deficit areas that are indicated through universal screening, there is a greater likelihood that target instruction will be provided to identify students. Ms. Haywood stated that it is her goal to continue to strengthen the collaboration between special education and general education high school teachers so that content area courses are supported and students continue to meet expectations. Brugger stated that Haywood has proven herself available to parents and a very good resource in community engagement. Shannon said he was also pleased with Haywood's job performance. He asked about the facilitation of communication between regular ed teachers and special ed teachers regarding individualized instruction for special ed students. He also asked about what type of training ESPS had to support special needs students. Haywood explained that she has an open door and that many teachers come in to ask specific questions about specific students and how to address issues or challenges with particular tests, curriculum, etc. Haywood informed the committee that they would be conducting a survey for the ESPs, asking them what type of issues they were struggling with and what types of PD support would assist them in better supporting special education students to foster success and independence. The committee members thanked the leadership team for their plan presentations.

#### **District PD Plan- Supt. McKenzie (6:45 pm)**

McKenzie presented the district strategy document for the year and explained that it was linked to the Professional Development Plan and Calendar for the 2018-2019 school year. She explained the various options that educators had for their professional learning and the procedure for approval of professional learning goals and projects. Educators have to produce work products to be issued PDPs for continued certification.

#### **Superintendent Goals/ district Strategy- Supt. McKenzie (6:50 pm)**

McKenzie informed the committee that her proposed goals were intentionally aligned with the standards that the school committee is required by law to follow when conducting the superintendent's evaluation. She said that she also included some goals that she is aware are specifically important to the school committee and mentioned those as fostering community support for the athletic fields project, launching the student recruitment website, and collaborating with various town groups to host a community fair. She asked the committee if they had any questions and if they would like to review the proposed goals and revisit them at the next meeting. Phifer mentioned the goal of 100% funding for the fields and if McKenzie wanted to be accountable for that. McKenzie said it was an aspirational goal but that it is her goal. Klesch said that it demonstrated commitment of the superintendent. With no further questions or concerns, Phifer made a motion to accept the Superintendent's District Strategy and Goals for the 2018-2019 school year. Shannon seconded. The motion passed 5-0-0.

#### **Hartsbrook Approval (7:00 pm)**

McKenzie informed the committee that she visited the Hartsbrook School and they have submitted all the required paperwork and met all criteria so she recommends approval. Shannon moves to approve the 2018-2019 operations of Hartsbrook School. Phifer seconds. Motion carries 5-0-0.

### **Hopkins Graduation Date (7:05 pm)**

Mr. Beck reported that he had met with the senior class officers to make sure they were on track for events planned for the end of the year and that they would have their finances in order. The issue of graduation date was discussed. Traditionally, Hopkins has always graduated the first Friday in June, which is June 7<sup>th</sup> this year. Mr. Beck proposed that graduation date be May 31<sup>st</sup> this year to be more in sync with surrounding districts. He reported that he had researched the issue and that there was no existing school committee policy regarding graduation date, but the law states that the School Committee sets the graduation date, and that it cannot be any more than 12 days before the regular closing date of school. The question was posed if snow days would affect the date. McKenzie responded that snow days were not a factor. The 12 days referred to the regularly scheduled closing date of school. Shannon said he understood the advantages of scheduling the graduation on May 31<sup>st</sup> but asked if there were any disadvantages. Mr. Beck said it would be one less instructional day for seniors but that there were makeup days for exams well in advance of the graduation rehearsals and other senior events the week before graduation. Klesh asked if there was any further discussion. Fasihuddin made motion to set the date for 2019 graduation at Friday, May 31, 2019. Phifer seconded. The motion passed 5-0-0.

### **Personnel Report**

McKenzie reported that she would be filling the 0.8 FTE School Adjustment Counselor position shortly.

### **Public Comment Period**

There were no members of the public present for public comment.

### **Business Manager Report (7:15 pm)**

**Expense Report-** Desjardins reported that the status of the expense report had not changed significantly since the last meeting. He added that over budget line items were due to grant money not being generated to date. He mentioned that School Choice funds would not be transferred until later in the year. Desjardins informed the committee that town meeting had returned some funds that had been cut in June so that money would be returned to line items.

**Grant Report-** Title I, Title II, Title III grants have been approved and others are in approval pending status

**Revolving Accounts-** Desjardins said there were no deposits posted to the revolving accounts this month and some appeared as outstanding for that reason. Once the deposits get posted on the town side, some of those balances will be increased. The preschool 391 grant monies will be deposited for salaries in the Preschool account.

**Capital Plan- Status of Warrant Articles Fall Town Meeting-** Desjardins reported that the article on the warrant for school security upgrades in the amount of \$98,000 was passed. He added that the superintendent was aware of a grant forthcoming for school security and they would be looking into it to see what the criteria were for those grants. The second article for kitchen upgrades which is a borrowing item and requires a further vote. That funding will be delayed and the new equipment may be installed in the summer.

**Water Meter- HES-** Desjardins reported on the recent issue with HES having a water usage that is 4 times that of HA for unknown reason. He told the committee that he asked the water department for HES water usage history. The history of usage shows consistent increases over the past quarters such that it went from 17,000 cubic feet in May- August to 49,000 cubic feet in August – November and by February 2018 76,000 cubic feet. The water department has installed a new “smart” water meter that will track usage and perhaps shed some light on the water usage discrepancies. He said he would continue to follow up and report back to the committee.

#### **School Committee Reports/ Discussion (7:30 pm)**

**Policy** – Klesch reports Policy subcommittee meeting scheduled for November 19, 2018

**Finance/ Tri-Board-** Klesch -Desjardins had already reported on Capital Plan, nothing further

**Capital/ Fields-** no new information reported by Phifer at this time

**CES-** Fasihuddin attended the October CES meeting and forwarded committee members the executive report as well a listing of over 40 diverse professional learning opportunities for educators.

#### **PVCIS Expansion 7:35 pm**

Klesch provided members with a copy of the letter the committee sent to DESE in response to the last two PVCIS requests for expansion, which outlined concerns about the potential expansion. Klesch said that Amherst School committee and Northampton School Committee have inquired what stance the Hadley School Committee would take on this recent request submission. McKenzie pulled together some data that shows the two main concerns raised in previous letters, those being that the request for enrollment expansion does not seem to be justified in relation to their waiting list. The second concern was whether the enrollment reflected a broad range of students with varying needs. Students with needs seem to be underrepresented. Klesch asked the committee if they wanted to revisit the issue or keep the stand taken previously and if they wanted to communicate their stand to DESE. McKenzie explained how comparative data can be obtained from the DESE website on charter schools. There was some discussion about the financial impact that PVCIS has on Hadley Public Schools. Further discussion took place regarding the discrepancy between the town issuing a statement of support for the expansion and the school issuing a statement of concern. Klesch suggested drafting a letter with the same concerns and accompanying data while informing the Board of Selectmen of the school committee’s stand on the issue. Fasihuddin made a motion to write a letter to DESE voicing concerns and nonsupport for the expansion of the Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion charter School. Phifer seconds. Motion passes 5-0-0.

#### **Next Meeting**

Klesch asked if the committee would consider other dates for the next school committee meeting as she would be unavailable on November 25<sup>th</sup>. The committee agreed to hold the next school committee meeting on November 19, 2018.

#### **Other Business**

McKenzie mentioned that the Massachusetts minimum wage would increase to \$12.00 effective January 2019. She added that the nonunion substitute cafeteria workers and custodians should be considered

for wage increases and asked the committee what type of data they would like to be provided. Committee members asked for data from Hampshire country districts. Klesch stated that it important for Hadley to remain competitive.

**Adjournment 7:45 pm**

With no further business at hand, Klesch asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Brugger moves; Phifer seconded. Motion passes 5-0-0.