

**HADLEY SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS 01035**

**Minutes September 25, 2017 Hopkins Academy Music Room**

**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**

Phifer called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM. The following members were present: Fasihuddin, Phifer, Brugger, and Shannon.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**MOTION: (Fasihuddin/Brugger) to go into Executive Session to conduct strategy with respect to collective bargaining or contract negotiations with non union personnel if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect to the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and to reconvene in open session. Roll call vote: Fasihuddin-Yes; Brugger-Yes; Shannon – Yes; Phifer - Yes.**

**Record of Votes**

- *Approval of September 25, 2017 Consent Agenda, Minutes – Brugger moves to approve the School Committee minutes for August 28, 2017. Fasihuddin seconds. Vote 4-0-0.*
- *Approval of September 25, 2017 Consent Agenda, Warrants Submitted September 2017 – Shannon moves to approve the warrants submitted for September 2017. Brugger seconds. Vote 4-0-0.*
- *Adjournment – Fasihuddin moves to adjourn meeting at 7:55 pm. Brugger seconds. Vote 4-0-0.*

**Decisions/Actions**

- School Committee decides it will discuss its response to the proposed expansion of Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School at its October meeting.

**Summary of Discussion on Each Subject Presented to Committee for Consideration**

**Adjustments to the Agenda (3:40)**

McKenzie indicated to School Committee members they had received handouts including a HA Student Council Update and a list of common questions to School Board members from the NEASC visiting team. McKenzie would like to add these items to the agenda.

**Student Report (4:17)**

McKenzie thanked and recognized the students and faculty, especially Ms. Pipczynski for their efforts to participate in disaster relief for victims of recent hurricanes. McKenzie read the Student Council report to the School Committee. Activities in the report included: Hurricane Harvey Drive, Suicide Walk, Student Elections, Gender Equity Task Force, Service Club, and Extracurricular Fair.

**Nurse Leader Report (7:50)**

Nurse Leader Denenfeld presented the annual Health Services Department update to the School Committee. Denenfeld provided an update on the Innovative Care and Coordination Grant which includes the following objectives: increasing student re-entry into classes from the nurses office, increasing attendance, increasing students' readiness to learn, increasing the knowledge, abilities, and skills of the staff and faculty of Hadley Public Schools. Denenfeld discussed the district's involvement in the SBIRT program (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment). Denenfeld also discussed the district's efforts to fortify its suicide prevention efforts and reviewed statistics pertaining to suicide and mental health. Denenfeld asked committee members about how the district might promote attendance at community forums and increase engagement in outreach activities.

Fasihuddin thanked Denenfeld for her comprehensive report. She commented on the significant gains the district has made in attending to the health and wellness of students. Phifer asked if the yoga program would continue in 2017-18. Denenfeld indicated it is being incorporated into the physical education curriculum at both schools. Phifer asked what Denenfeld saw as the biggest challenges in the future. Denenfeld indicated that opioid addiction presents a significant challenge to communities and school districts nationally and in the Commonwealth. Hadley will continue with substance abuse education as part of its intervention and prevention efforts. Fasihuddin commented that the numbers pertaining to eating disorders had inched up slightly. Denenfeld reminded the committee that because the district has such a small population, a minor increase can have a dramatic impact on percentages. Denenfeld said it is important to analyze the data but equally important to put the data in context. Shannon thanked Denenfeld and asked about changes to the number of students being diagnosed with PTSD. Denenfeld said this diagnosis is more prevalent and consequently the district can expect to see more cases being reported. McKenzie thanked Denenfeld for her leadership and vision. McKenzie pointed out to committee members that as a result of Denenfeld's leadership, Hadley is ahead of the curve with many mental health initiatives. Denenfeld thanked McKenzie for her support. Fasihuddin suggested including information in the superintendent weekly update on facts and resources pertaining to social/emotional/mental health. Fasihuddin suggested making community forums focused on a specific topic with people sharing about their experiences. Brugger commented on the importance of breaking the stigma associated with mental illness by creating opportunities for people to talk openly about these issues. Shannon suggested identifying people who may be able to help with organizing and facilitating community forums.

#### Update on Student Work to Foster a Safe and Supportive School Climate (39:00)

McKenzie reviewed the questions she had included in the agenda and identified how the questions framing the agenda reflected research on what effective School Committees do. McKenzie provided School Committee with an update on the efforts of HA students to create a safe and supportive school climate. HA students have developed a faculty reporting network to enhance, not replace, existing procedures for reporting sensitive incidents (e.g., sexism, harassment, racism, discrimination, etc.). These procedures do not replace any existing policies nor do they negate the obligation of the district through its civil rights officer to identify and investigate all incidents of possible civil rights violations and intervene in accordance with investigation findings and committee policy. McKenzie acknowledged the leadership of students at HA to identify problems and issues and recommend ways to improve their climate. Fasihuddin also recognized the students' leadership.

#### Title I Program Evaluation Data (42:00)

McKenzie reviewed Title I data from 2016-17. She reminded the committee that the district is required to evaluate its Title I program annually. McKenzie stated that the program evaluation centers around the question, "Has the program resulted in increased student growth and achievement?" McKenzie indicated that there were very positive changes in growth in grade equivalencies. When looking at changes in normal curve equivalents, results were more mixed. McKenzie indicated the district looks at these data alongside other standardized measures and curriculum-based assessments to ascertain what additional interventions a student or students might need. Changes in Developmental Reading Assessment scores indicated all students demonstrated growth. Phifer asked if the data would be presented annually. McKenzie said yes and that she would be presenting data from the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) and MCAS at future meetings. Fasihuddin asked why so few students in grade two receive Title I services. McKenzie stated that only a few students met the Title I selection criteria in grade two last year.

#### Choice and Charter Report (52:48)

McKenzie reviewed the report enclosed in the School Committee packet. She stated that there did not seem to be any clear patterns or trends when looking at school choice data. She noted that for most districts choice in and choice out was relatively even, except for in Amherst. McKenzie stated that based on when students are choosing to leave Hadley for Amherst and vice versa, she could speculate that students were looking to attend a smaller or

larger high school. McKenzie also noted that students with special needs choosing out of the district decreased from FY16 to FY17 and students with special needs choosing in increased. McKenzie said that this is not trend data nor are the changes significant but that she would like the district to be seen as a choice destination for students with disabilities and special needs. McKenzie also wanted to dispel the idea that special education students who choose in are a financial liability when the data demonstrate that the district receives significantly higher reimbursement for students with special needs. Fasihuddin indicated she has heard that students with special needs who choose into the district are taxing the system and wanted to make clear that the district receives revenue from the sending district for all costs associated with providing services to students with special needs. Brugger asked if the district had data broken down by special education choice in and out by grade. McKenzie said she would present that data at a future meeting. Phifer asked about the inequity of reimbursements between charter, choice, and vocational tuition. McKenzie reviewed the tuition costs associated with each. McKenzie indicated that she and Desjardins would provide more detailed data on the charter tuition and reimbursement formula at the October meeting. McKenzie reminded committee members that DESE is accepting public comment on the proposed expansion of the Pioneer Valley Immersion Charter School. Fasihuddin indicated the committee should consider making a public statement and bringing that statement to the attention of the town. Fasihuddin believes it is important for the town to understand the implications of supporting charter school expansion. Fasihuddin noted that the number of students the district is losing to charter schools is having a negative financial impact on the district. Phifer stated getting information in front of the town by the special town meeting might be difficult. McKenzie said that there probably would not be sufficient time to present something at Fall Town Meeting but that the committee could draft a public comment to submit to DESE by the December deadline. Brugger indicated the district does not appear to have a choice but to weigh in on the matter. Fasihuddin asked if charter schools can choose not to admit students with special needs. McKenzie stated this is not the case. Charter schools are public schools and must abide by all federal and state laws. McKenzie said in some cases parents of children with special needs have expressed frustration with receiving needed services for their children in some charter schools. McKenzie said in some cases charter programs offer programs that would not be beneficial or enjoyable for students with certain or significant disabilities (e.g., some students may not be able to fully participate in a dual language immersion program). Shannon asked if charter schools must offer all of the services a child needs. McKenzie said that charter schools employ special educators and related service providers; however, some parents have argued that the services are not sufficient to meet the needs of their children. McKenzie also explained that the financial responsibility for students with special needs rests with the town; therefore, if a Hadley student attends a charter school and the school does not have a program suitable for the student, Hadley must find a suitable placement for the student. Fasihuddin and Shannon believe that the committee should make a statement about the proposed expansion of PVCICS. Fasihuddin said it is important to help townspeople understand the financial implications of charter expansion. McKenzie stated that she does not question parents' decision-making regarding the education of their children; her frustration is with the funding and reimbursement formula and the unequal financial responsibility for providing programs for students with special needs not with families having a choice. McKenzie said she will bring additional data to the next meeting and sample response letters from other school committees. The School Committee can identify a representative to draft a response for public comment.

#### Innovation and Program Development (1:19:00)

McKenzie reviewed two ideas she is researching to attract more students to the district. McKenzie reviewed steps she has taken to establish a tuition-based program at HA for international students and the development of a firefighter and EMT certification program at HA. Chief Spanknabel has been instrumental in researching the firefighter and EMT certification program. Shannon asked about costs associated with obtaining necessary visas for an international program. McKenzie said she would research this.

#### Review of District Strategy and Superintendent Draft Goals 2017-18 (1:24:37)

McKenzie said she included the document as a resource for the committee as they reviewed her proposed goals. The committee will update the district strategy document in the summer of 2018. Committee members agreed to review the proposed goals and McKenzie will bring the goals back for revision at the October meeting.

#### Personnel Report (1:26:30)

McKenzie noted the substitute ESP position had been filled. She expects the coordinator position to be filled shortly.

#### Public Comment Period (1:27:00)

None

#### ***Business Manager Reports***

##### Expense Report (1:27:08)

Desjardins noted that he had made some adjustments to the electricity costs. He will do more work on this to make sure that the encumbrances are as accurate as possible. In some cases overages may look significant in terms of percentage but are relatively small when viewed in terms of actual dollars.

##### Grant Report (1:28:00)

Desjardins indicated that the district is still waiting to hear when 274 and 298 will be posted. Circuit breaker shows a balance of \$419 thousand which is carryover from FY17. The FY18 awarded amount is proposed and will be adjusted in June. Carryover from FY17 was about \$121 thousand dollars. Some of the other grants have not yet been utilized such as 240. This grant is used primarily for tuitions.

##### Air Conditioning Update and Capital Plan (1:30:40)

Desjardins updated committee members on bid process for air conditioning. Desjardins researched whether or not the contractor for the job must be DCAMM certified and determined that this is a requirement. Desjardins has reviewed the bid documents with David Nixon. The district will go out to bid again in January at the recommendation of the people who assisted with developing the specifications. Once the bids come in the district will need to determine how it will raise any additional funds that are needed to complete the job. Fasihuddin asked how the district advertises bids. Desjardins explained that he sends bid packets to known vendors in the area, industry organizations, and posts the bid on the state website. Desjardins said he sent out about twelve bid packets and received only one bid. Fasihuddin encouraged certified professionals in the Hadley area to respond to the bid.

#### ***School Committee Reports (1:35:32)***

##### Negotiations

McKenzie reported that negotiations with Unit A are progressing well.

##### Policy Subcommittee Update

McKenzie reported a meeting is scheduled in the upcoming week.

##### Finance Triboard Update

No report

##### Fields

Phifer thanked CPA for recommending a warrant article of \$400,000 to renovate and improve the HA athletic fields. The article will be voted on at Fall Town Meeting.

##### CES Update

Fasihuddin will be attending a meeting at CES in the coming week.

##### Other Information

None

#### **List of Documents and Exhibits Used at Meeting**

- Agenda September 25, 2017
- August 28, 2017 School Committee Minutes

- Students of Hadley Helping Students of Hurricane Harvey Information Flyer
- Student Council School Committee Update
- PPT Slides Nurse Leader Report
- Health Services Department Annual Report to the Superintendent and School Committee
- Title I Program Evaluation 2017
- School Choice and Charter Report July 25, 2017
- Innovation and Program Development Information
- HPS District Strategy Document
- Draft Superintendent Goals 2017-18
- Personnel Report 9/25/2017
- Expense Report 9/21/2017
- Grant Allocations for FY17 dated 9/20/2017
- Email Regarding Charter Amendment PVCICS

**Names of Remote Participants**

No members participated remotely.

**Next Regular Meeting Dates**

October 23, 2017 at 5:30 pm. Phifer will not be present.

**Adjournment** \_\_\_\_\_ **7:55** \_\_\_\_\_ **PM**