

HADLEY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
HADLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS 01035
November 20, 2023

Zoom Meeting: 5:30 PM – [Regular Meeting recording](#)

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.

Present: H. Fasihuddin, T. Brugger, E. Percy, A. McKenzie

Student Representative:

Absent: P. Phifer, C. Pipczynski

Guests: Chris Desjardins, Director of Finance, Celia Snow, Director of Special Education, Susan Duncan, HA Science Teacher, Michelle Wojotowicz, SEL Coach, Robin Cycz, School Nurse, Joyce Chunglo, Hadley Select Board, Hadley Media representative

1. Call to Order: 5:30pm

Motion: Brugger Second: Percy Vote: 3-0-0

2. Adjustments to the Agenda

A. McKenzie requested to move action items requiring votes to the top of the agenda to assure that a quorum was present.

3. [Public Comment](#) – Chair Fasihuddin asked for any public comment. She noted that no raised hands were observed requesting to make a statement or comment.

4. Presentations/Discussion Items

- a. [Nature's Classroom Field Trip Approval](#) (Duncan) – Hopkins Academy science teacher Susan Duncan presented information (Linked to this agenda item) requesting approval for Nature's Classroom Field Trip. This is an overnight field trip in Ocean Park, Maine which is a hands on learning experience that includes communication, team building and learning about other cultures. School Committee members stated their support for this field trip.

Action Item: Approve Nature's Classroom Field Trip as presented:

Motion: Brugger Second: Percy Vote: 3-0-0

- d) [Letter of support](#) re: bills related to MCAS – (taken out of order)

Chair Fasihuddin reviewed the attached letter of support for the THRIVE act. No revisions or modifications were suggested.

Action Item: Approve sending letter of support concerning the THRIVE ACT:

Motion: Brugger Second: Percy Vote: 3-0-0

- e) Second reading [JLCG HPS Allergy](#) Policy

Policy subcommittee member Percy stated that this is the second reading of the JLCG HPS Allergy policy. This aligns with current procedures and practices that are already in place. This has been reviewed by legal. J. Chunglo asked about the availability of epi pens in case of anaphylaxis – School Nurse Robin Cycz stated that there are always epi pens available, some are self-carried by students and others are supplied by the state.

Action Item: Approve JLCG HPS Allergy Policy as presented:

Motion: Brugger Second: Percy Vote: 3-0-0

- f) [Updated Capital Plan](#) – Director of Finance Christopher Desjardins reviewed updates to the Capital Plan, stating that costs associated with items and projects that won't be done until future years were moved to future years.

Action Item: Approve updates to the Capital Plan as presented:

Motion: Brugger Second: Percy Vote: 3-0-0

- h) [District Strategy Presentation](#) – Dr. McKenzie presented the HPS District Strategy document. This is a five year document presently focusing on priorities for this year. The overall goal is to ensure that

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people experience a sense of belonging and connection with Hadley Public Schools. Priorities under each standard were reviewed, including implementation of practices that foster belonging such as restorative justice and responsive classroom. HPS is also looking to ensure that instructional practices are aligned to make all students successful in various areas including academically and in the students' future. HPS is expanding options for high school students by expanding various pathway options. Dr. McKenzie noted that this year, internship opportunities in the trade fields are being sought, and local businesses have identified some possibilities. Other areas were reviewed including family and community engagement with education on social media awareness and cell phone use. Professional Culture goals include surveying staff to elicit feedback, creating teacher-led leadership structures, and providing opportunities for professional development.

Action Item: Approve District Strategy as presented:

Motion: Brugger

Second: Percy

Vote: 3-0-0

6. Action Item

- a. Approval of [SC Minutes 10/23/2023](#)

Action Item: Approve 10/23/2023 School Committee Minutes as presented:

Motion: Brugger

Second: Percy

Vote: 3-0-0

7. School Committee Updates (Taken out of Order)

- a. Playground and CES Report – SC Member T. Brugger reported that the next meeting for CES is scheduled for January, she will report back then. The Playground Committee is strategizing on how to move forward, and surveyed parents to ask if they would like to participate on a fundraising committee. Several people showed interest and a meeting is scheduled and roles will be assigned to various committee members.

4. Presentations/Discussion Items (continued)

- b. [Annual Goals and Priorities Director of Student Services](#) – Director of Student Services Celia Snow presented her annual goals and priorities, as linked to these minutes, stating that her goal is to align the student services with the strategic plans of the school buildings and the district. She stated that collaboration is essential and that all students should have access to tier one classroom instruction as much as possible, utilizing universal screening to ensure all students have access.

Snow noted that select staff are being trained to be Safety Care trainers for the district; this provides tools to be safe when working with behaviorally challenging students. She is also working on a professional development plan for Educational Support Professionals (ESPs) designed around the that teachers and ESPs feel they need in order to work with students with disabilities effectively. Under community engagement, there is collaboration with neighboring districts to provide parent workshops on various topics in special education as well as collaboration with Hartsbrook School to ensure that students found eligible for special education have access to supports and services.

School Committee members praised the work being done in the area of Special Education. Dr. McKenzie stated that Dr. Snow is a highly skilled educator and that the district is fortunate to have her.

- c. HA Social Academic Behavior Screening Data – [Presentation](#) – Social Emotional Learning Coach Michelle Wojtowicz gave an overview of Mental Health and Behaviors data for Hopkins Academy. She explained that the goal is to have at least 80% of students in low risk area. She further explained how a culture providing responsive a growth mindset for *all* students and a culture of collaboration to improve outcomes results in a strong system of support for all students.

Ms. Wojtowicz reviewed the data results of reporting by students (self reporting) and teachers, noting that very few students showed as being in high risk. Those showing as being at high risk are

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provided with additional supports and/or services. She also compared data from Fall 2022 to Fall 2023, which showed increased participation in self-reporting and decreased number of students at high risk.

She further reported that disciplinary referrals dropped, and that the majority of referrals were in a minor category. Improvements have been seen and felt in hallways, cafeteria, and classrooms. Efforts to improve culture include emphasis on healthy and positive relationships, SEL practices, schedule consistency and increased café and hallway supervision. Restorative Justice Training and proactive and positive parent communication have also contributed to more positive culture.

- d. [School Choice Revenue and Expense Projections](#) – Director of Finance and Operations Desjardins reviewed a breakdown of the School Choice Balance and what it is expected to look like in the coming years. School Choice will be used to pay for some items in the capital plan (not the deep energy retrofit planning, we will use ESSR funds for that project.) \$200K has been allocated for contingency for the locker room and athletic fields projects, with \$100K allocated for the HES playground project, leaving approximately \$1.3M at the end of this year. Expected balance at the end of FY2025 is approximately \$465K, keeping HPS at the required policy minimum of \$395K.
- i. [Special Town Meeting](#) Update: [Locker Project](#) Passes – Dr. McKenzie reported that Special Town Meeting agreed to place the school department request for locker room renovations on the Town Election on December 12, 2023. The vote will be to raise and appropriate, borrow, transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide \$1,069,531 to pay the costs of a renovation of the girls' and boys' locker rooms at Hopkins Academy. Early voting is available.
- k. [Superintendent Report](#) – Dr. McKenzie reviewed the Superintendent's Report linked to these minutes, noting that Hadley Elementary School has been named in the top 40% of elementary schools in Massachusetts by US News and World Report.

She also highlighted a slide presentation linked in the report that provides important information on the estimated net cost of installing ground source heat pumps, as well as a timeline for the project. These documents illustrate that with the geothermal option, there is a reduction in annual emissions and reliance on fossil fuel, coupled with financial incentives which lowers the overall costs of the project significantly.

She also pointed out that information on approving the Hartsbrook School as a private school in the district is in the report. The School Committee does not need to vote on it as the Superintendent reviews the application each year in accordance with district policy, and everything is in good order.

- 5. [Business Manager Report](#) – Director of Finance Chris Desjardins, utilizing documents linked to these minutes, reviewed the expense report, revolving account report, and grant report. All expenses are in line with the budget, some overspent lines will be charged to grants. The balance in the cafeteria revolving appears low, however it does not include revenue for September and October. The approval process for grants has been slow this year, but he does not see any issues.

6. Action Items

- g. [Approval of Dispositions and Donations](#) – Mr. Desjardins presented the list of items for disposition (linked to this action item.)

Action Item: Approve list of Dispositions as presented:

Motion: Brugger

Second: Percy

Vote: 3-0-0

7. School Committee Updates and General Announcements

- b. Finance – No report/no new information

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- c. Fields – No report
 - d. Capital and Negotiations – No report – Pipczynski will report next month
 - e. Policy – No additional report
- Other – Select Board member Chunglo invited members of the School Committee to the December 6, 2023 Select Board meeting for discussion with Finance Committee and Select Board. She also announce that the lighting of the tree in front of Hopkins Academy will take place on the Saturday after Thanksgiving at 5pm. There will also be a lighting of a tree in North Hadley on the Sunday after Thanksgiving.

8. Next Meeting Dates

- a. December 21, 2023 @ 5:30 PM

9. Adjourn Regular Meeting – 7:04pm

Motion: Percy

Second: Brugger

Vote: 3-0-0

Approved 12/21/2023