

School Committee Minutes
Virtual Meeting
April 11, 2022
6:15 p.m.

Members attending: Suzanne Allen, Abby Besse, Sharlene Cronin, Shannon Molloy, SusanMary Redinger,

Others in attendance: Linda Dwight, Ingrid Nilsson, Asha Khurana

SusanMary Redinger called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

Asha Khurana read the Vision Statement.

Public Commentary: None

Student Report:

Asha Khurana reported

- The Sound of Music was a smash hit. Everyone loved it and it was great to see the stage back in action. The event seemed to have caused a COVID spike but hopefully that is under control now.
- Quarter 3 ended on Thursday and report cards will be going out this week.
- The Model UN Lip Sync event is scheduled for May 4th.
- Project 351 collected trash bags filled with clothing to donate to the Cradles to Crayons organization.
- The high school and middle school concerts have been rescheduled until after April vacation.
- Prom is in the air and juniors and seniors are very excited about that.
- A Career zoom session is planned. It will be led by a Bromfield alumna and should be very informative.

Superintendent Update - See Attached

Food Service Presentation

Dr. Dwight introduced the Food Service Director, Eleni Burns to present on the school lunch program at Harvard Public Schools. Ms. Burns shared that the goal of the school lunch program is to provide students with access to a variety of appealing foods that meet the nutritional needs of students. Ms. Burns plans to have a farm to school program through the USDA and DESE where we send out bids to local farms to participate in the program. Local farms are able to bid on supplying fresh produce to our schools. Ms. Burns is hoping to start a garden next year that will provide herbs and other fresh grown products that will be used in the kitchens at both schools.

School Business Manager FTE Adjustment

Dr. Dwight requested to increase the FTE for the Business Manager from .6 FTE to full time. Dr. Dwight outlined the work that Ingrid Nilsson has accomplished over the last year. We have

determined that we will be able to establish stronger best practices and eliminate single points of failure in our accounting and finance process. The funds for this additional time will come from either personnel savings or the Devens fund.

Sharlene Cronin made the motion Suzanne Allen seconded to approve the request to move our finance director to full time as proposed by the Superintendent.

VOTE: Allen (Aye) Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye) Redinger (Aye)

Superintendent/SC Goals Review

Strategic Plan Goal

Suzanne Allen gave an update on the Strategic Plan. The group is meeting their benchmarks and should be able to share the new Strategic Plan with the School Committee and community by the end of June.

Dr. Dwight will have the new administrators weigh in and work on the District Improvement plan over the summer.

Budget Goal

Sharlene Cronin explained that progress is being made towards meeting the budget measures. The FY23 budget is prepared and we will hold a public budget hearing at our next meeting. The Budget Subcommittee will work on the development of a preliminary year two (FY24) budget and work is on-going relative to ESSER grant funding, the bus contract and teacher negotiations.

Best Practice Goal

SusanMary Redinger shared that the Best Practice Subcommittee is on track with all measures and are very excited about their work.

Will do a final review of the goals at the end of the year.

Vote Last Day of School

The last day of school is Wednesday, June 22, 2022.

Sharlene Cronin made the motion and Suzanne Allen seconded to vote the last day of school as June 22nd.

VOTE: Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye)

Dr. Dwight would like to request a calendar change in order to accommodate the town election. The request is to eliminate the May 11th early release day and make May 17th an early release day.

Suzanne Allen made the motion and Sharlene Cronin seconded to move the May 11th early release day to May 17th.

VOTE: Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye)

Best Practices Presentation of New Member Orientation

Sharlene Cronin shared the information that the Best Practices Subcommittee has been put together into a New Member Orientation handbook. The handbook will be a resource for new

members. The contents of the handbook were shared with School Committee members for input and feedback. At future meetings the School Committee will review more of the handbook until the entire handbook has been reviewed by the full Committee with ability to offer input and feedback.

Devens Enrollment and Devens Fund Update

The Devens Education Advisory Committee (DEAC) wanted to understand the expected enrollment capacity for the Harvard Public Schools in the coming years. Using the enrollment projection tool, SusanMary Redinger was able to determine enrollment based on birth rate projections. SusanMary Redinger created a memo to send back to DEAC explaining what the expected enrollment capacity is for future years at TBS and HES.

Bromfield House Official Turnover to Town (VOTE)

The Committee discussed relinquishing custody of the Bromfield House. The Committee agreed that there is a value in keeping the property for potential educational use, but with the lack of funding and community support to invest in the necessary changes this is not a viable option. Any further delay in the School Committee voting to relinquish the Bromfield House would cause a problem for the Afghan families that are planning to move there. It was decided the Committee would endorse relinquishing the property with a strong recommendation to the Selectboard to consider the importance of the land in close proximity to the school for future educational purposes.

SusanMary Redinger made the motion and Sharlene Cronin second that the School Committee no longer requires the use of the Bromfield House for educational purposes and therefore relinquishes its custody of the property to the Select Board as of April 11, 2022.

VOTE: Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye)

Future Meeting Dates

April 25th

May 9th and 23rd

Look at summer schedule.

Plan Student Advisory meeting – email SusanMary Redinger topics

Agenda

Financial fund update

Devens fund update

DEI update

Community Ed presentation

Start Time review

Continued New member orientation

Special Education program update

Registration portal request

Minutes

With no objection, SusanMary Redinger approved the minutes of the March 21, 2022 meeting as amended.

School Committee Liaison and Subcommittee Reports

Sharlene Cronin reported that the Budget Subcommittee will be meeting again after Spring break.

Sharlene Cronin reported that Best Practices meets later this week and will incorporate your feedback into the document. We will formalize other ideas that we have generated and bring back to the group for feedback.

Suzanne Allen reported that School Council meets this week.

Suzanne Allen reported that the Strategic Planning Group meets this week.

Shannon Molloy presented accounts payable Warrant 22-21 in the amount of \$156,000 for members to review.

Shannon Molloy reported that COVID Safe Schools Committee met and discussed the beginnings of what is now trending with COVID due in part to the Sound of Music production.

Shannon Molloy reported that she is part of the HES Principal Search Committee which starts tomorrow and is very exciting.

Abby Besse reported that the MS Principal Search Committee will be interviewing candidates on Monday, Tuesday and Friday of this week.

Abby Besse reported that Parks & Rec met and the fields are wet and closed. There has been good communication getting that info out to coaches. Parents are shuffling kids all over the place to find a place for them to play their sports. Hoping fields will be open and be ready for use soon.

Abby Besse reported that DEAC will be meeting at the end of the month.

Abby Besse reported that the HES School Council is working on their School Improvement Plan.

SusanMary Redinger reported that HEAC meets on Wednesday. They will be discussing the school weatherization project. The vehicle electric charger station is now on line for use.

SusanMary Redinger reported that the Climate Action Plan Committee will be meeting on Wednesday and SusanMary will be attending.

SusanMary Redinger reported that DEAC removed themselves from the Harvard Devens Jurisdiction Framework Committee. SusanMary suggested members watch the latest meeting in order to understand the reasoning. There is still quite a bit of work over boundaries, taxes etc. and they are hoping Ayer and Shirley will continue to work on the Committee.

SusanMary Redinger reported that the Revenue Ideation Committee is finalizing their report that will be submitted to the Selectboard.

SusanMary Redinger reported that the School Building Committee received a quote to build a stone wall on the Hildreth Elementary side of Mass Ave in the amount of \$170,000. The quote has been turned over to Dr. Dwight for approval.

SusanMary Redinger reported that the Negotiations Subcommittee met and we will go over that in Executive Session.

Public Commentary - None

School Committee Commentary

Suzanne Allen is so proud of the donation made as part of the 351 Project - Cradles to Crayons and to the Epilepsy Foundation. It was great to be part of that wonderful project.

Adjourn

SusanMary Redinger made a motion to adjourn into executive session at 8:30 p.m. to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the HTA because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the school committee. We will not be returning into public session.

VOTE: Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye)