

School Committee Meeting Minutes
Virtual Meeting
January 9, 2023
6:15 PM

Members attending: Suzanne Allen, Abigail Besse, Heather Knowles, Shannon Molloy, and SusanMary Redinger.

Absent members: Sharlene Cronin.

Others in attendance: Linda Dwight, Caitlin Lelievre, and Ingrid Nilsson.

Ms. Besse called the meeting to order at 6:15 PM.

Executive Session:

At 6:15 PM, a motion was made and seconded to enter into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the HEA because an open meeting may have detrimental effects on the bargaining position of the School Committee. Members agreed unanimously by a roll call vote and will return to open session.

Move: Ms. Redinger

Second: Ms. Allen

Status: Passed

Members returned to open session at 7:10 PM.

Vision Statement:

Asha Khurana read the vision statement.

Student Update:

Asha Khurana reported that winter sports are in full swing. She also shared that nine students have been admitted to the Central District Music Festival which will take place the weekend of January 14th. Additionally, Mrs. Bradley redecorated the atrium for students and they are able to eat lunch there while waiting for the additional furniture to be delivered.

Public Commentary:

None.

Superintendent Update:

Dr. Dwight shared her submitted report as follows:

- Electric Buses (a study): The District has joined in a partnership with several other districts to apply for a regional grant that will study bus/van electrification opportunities.
- Air Filters Changed: Patrick Harrigan, Facilities Director, and his team spent time over the winter break replacing air filters in all of the air exchange systems. This will ensure a healthier environment in the schools for students and staff.
- Piloting Elementary Math Programs: Teachers plan to use the early release day on January 11th to collaborate and plan the piloting of three math series under consideration for use in the elementary school.
- Graphic Design: The District has been working with a graphic designer, David Gerratt, to create a visual representation of the vision statement and core values. The finished product will be displayed on the HPS website and in each school.
- CPIC Questions: Thanks to Ingrid Nilsson, Sharlene Cronin, Patrick Harrigan, and others for their diligence in answering the questions posed by the CPIC members on the District's capital improvement submissions.

Update on Shared Goals:

Dr. Dwight reviewed the first goal, future space needs consideration, and indicated that there has not been significant progress on this goal yet but she would like to form the subcommittee so that the future space needs for the District can be analyzed. She asked that Committee members interested in serving on this subcommittee reach out to her directly.

Ms. Besse reported progress on the second goal, field improvements, and said that Ann Lees is ready and Ryan Land II just needs one more fix before it is ready to be used as well. The Town of Harvard is currently working on hiring a Recreation Director who would be responsible for supervising the fields as of July 1, 2023 to ensure proper maintenance and compliance with MIAA. Dr. Dwight shared that she is working on a MOU with Parks and Recreation and will share a draft with the Committee at a later date. Dr. Dwight also said that she has been in contact with someone who will do a Title IX review and is waiting on a proposal.

Ms. Redinger updated the Committee on the third goal, negotiating a three year contract, and shared that they are currently in negotiations. While they have not ratified the contract yet, they are committed to meeting the goal before June 1, 2023.

Annual Report Review and Finalization:

Ms. Redinger shared the draft she put together for the annual report and asked for feedback from Committee members. Once she receives feedback, she will format it and send it to town hall by the January 23rd deadline.

PowerSchool HR Platform Request:

Ms. Nilsson shared a memo with Committee members requesting approval for the purchase and implementation of PowerSchool's Unified Talent Employee Records management system in an effort to create a more organized process for employee documents, records, and updates. Committee members had an opportunity to ask questions to ensure this is the package the District needs and that services are being bundled in the most cost effective way.

A motion was made and seconded to encumber up to \$4,000 out of the Devens fund for the purchase of the PowerSchool software as presented. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Ms. Redinger Second: Ms. Allen Status: Passed

A motion was made and seconded to reallocate the funds originally approved for the purchase of MUNIS for up to \$5,000 towards the PowerSchool purchase as presented. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Ms. Redinger Second: Ms. Allen Status: Passed

Letter to Legislature:

Ms. Molloy shared a draft letter to Senator Eldridge and Representative Sena expressing concern over the out-of-district tuition increase and requesting that the Legislature work together to fund a modest and phased-in tuition rate increase that is affordable to local districts. Committee members reviewed the letter and provided feedback.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the letter as written and amended to send to the District's representatives. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Ms. Allen Second: Ms. Redinger Status: Passed

Policy Review:

Ms. Allen presented the proposed changes to policies: IMB, JLB, and JLC. Committee members decided to vote on the policies individually.

A motion was made and seconded to approve policy IMB as presented. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Ms. Redinger Second: Ms. Allen Status: Passed

A motion was made and seconded to approve policy JLB as presented. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Ms. Redinger Second: Ms. Allen Status: Passed

A motion was made and seconded to approve policy JLC as presented. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Ms. Redinger Second: Ms. Allen Status: Passed

Grants/Club/Field Trip Approval:

Dr. Dwight shared the grants pending School Committee approval and answered questions from members regarding details of specific grants.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the gifts and the grants from the Harvard Schools Trust and the PTO as presented. The motion was passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Move: Ms. Allen Second: Ms. Redinger Status: Passed

Future Meeting Dates:

The next meeting will be held on January 23, 2023 at 6:15 PM. A Special Town Meeting has been scheduled for February 13, 2023 which conflicts with a School Committee meeting. Ms. Besse asked to move the School Committee meeting to February 6, 2023 so members can attend both meetings.

Agenda Items:

Upcoming agenda items include best practices, policy, a mid-year financial report, and a curriculum presentation. Ms. Besse asked members to contact her if they have any additions.

Minutes:

Ms Besse approved the December 12th and December 15th meeting minutes with no objection.

SC Liaison and Subcommittee Reports:

Ms. Molloy asked if anyone has been receiving the warrants since a recent role change at town hall. None of the Committee members have so she plans to reach out to town hall.

Ms. Allen shared that the transportation and wellness advisory committees will be meeting in the next couple weeks and will have an update at the next meeting.

Ms. Redinger shared that the work on the stonewall continues and is nearing completion. Additionally, the School Building Committee will approve the last expenses and close out the project at their next meeting. The TBS School Council was not able to meet before break, but is scheduled to meet soon and will continue working on the youth at risk survey results.

Ms. Knowles reported on her DEAC meeting held on January 7th and shared that she was re-elected. Roles will be reassigned when they meet on January 12th. One of their goals is to have a direct conduit to the people.

Ms. Besse said they are in the process of scheduling another Student Advisory Council meeting and asked members to send her any questions they would like distributed for feedback. The HES School Council met during the first week in January and discussed the school climate survey - they plan to send it out in early spring.

Dr. Dwight said the District is planning to hold a public forum on January 26th at 7 PM to discuss the budget in the hopes that the community will understand the pressures involved in this process. The District is also hosting its first wellness meeting on January 17th. Dr. Dwight also said that Arrowstreet reached out to share that HES was selected as the winner of the Boston Society of Architecture - K-12 Education Facilities Design award.

Public Commentary:

None.

School Committee Commentary:

Ms. Molloy shared that the Harvard Civics Cup will be held on March 5, 2023 from 1-3 PM at town hall.

Adjourn:

With no objection, Ms. Besse adjourned the meeting at 8:32 PM.