

School Committee Minutes
Virtual Meeting
Monday, April 27, 2020

Members attending: John Ruark, Sharlene Cronin, SusanMary Redinger, Suzanne Allen, Shannon Molloy, Maureen Babcock, Linda Dwight. Absent Aziz Aghayev.

John Ruark called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

Suzanne Allen read the Vision Statement

John Ruark read a statement indicating that the meeting was being held remotely and the meeting was being held via video conferencing. Members in attendance were identified through a role call process.

Student Report – None

Remote Learning Update

On April 21st, the Governor closed school for the remainder of the year. It is especially hard for the juniors who are looking at college visits and GPA reporting and the seniors who want to celebrate their graduation and say goodbye to teachers and peers. Elementary students are reliant on parents for more help with the technology and assignments. Phase 3 will include information on end of year grades and report cards, graduation plans, parent/teacher conferences, transitions to the next grade level, summer services, prioritized curriculum standards, and more. We are working with members of the teachers' union and awaiting the Commissioner's next guidance as part of the process. We will communicate the details of Phase 3 later this week. Aziz Aghayev is reviewing expenses and preparing a forecast of savings projected at the end of FY20. Dr. Dwight has advised cost center managers to limit spending for the remainder of the year.

Superintendent Update – See Attached

Booster Policy Introduction

Shannon Molloy introduced a draft of the Guidelines for Booster Organization that the Policy Subcommittee has been working to create. The guidelines are designed to ensure that booster group activities and events support the mission and vision of Harvard Public Schools, and to ensure equity and establish expectations for collaboration between booster organization and the School Committee acting through the school's administration. The Committee will seek feedback from booster organizations (i.e. curriculum enrichment, music groups, athletic teams, drama clubs) for input. The Committee began the process of seeking feedback. After feedback from the full committee and booster organization is complete a final draft will be prepared and returned to the Committee for a first read of the policy.

Proposed Special Education Classroom at HES

Principal, Josh Myler presented a proposal to expand inclusive supports at HES that would benefit students who would otherwise need to be placed out of district for their education. This

program keeps students connected to their community, strengthens connections to families, and improves the likelihood of student returning to the general education classroom over time. There is flexibility to add new students as needed. A cost comparison for in district versus out of district shows a break-even scenario. If more students were added to the program the only additional cost would be a learning assistant at approximately \$25,000. It is a great plan to keep the students in district. Dr. Dwight suggested that the budget subcommittee present the proposal for informational purposes to the Chair of the Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen. John Ruark requested a proposal using actual numbers of students that would accept enrollment and that the benefits numbers be verified with Marie Sobalvarro. The Committee plans to vote on the proposal at their next meeting.

Kindergarten Tuition Refund; Vote

The Committee discussed whether the district should stop collecting tuition payments for the full day kindergarten program. The question came up as to the difference between the half and the full day program at this time of distance learning and the justification for charging for the full day program if the services are the same as the half day program which is provided at no charge. The school budgeted the program with tuition included as an offset and it would be a financial hit to not collect the tuition at this time. The Committee will table this item and solicit feedback and vote at their next meeting.

Grant/Donation Approval; Vote

A donation of camera equipment from Kenneth Nickerson of Harvard valued at \$6,951 was presented to the Committee for approval.

Shannon Molloy made the motion and SusanMary Redinger seconded to approve the gift as presented.

Allen (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye), Ruark (Aye)

School Building Update

SusanMary Redinger gave the following update on the School Building project.

- Carpenters have returned to work.
- The building is now completely enclosed.
- There are 40 workers on site.
- The district will take responsibility to monitor workers for fevers in accordance with COVID-19 guidelines.
- The School Building Committee's next meeting is scheduled for April 30th.
- The Building Committee will be voting to consider removing baffles from the project scope.
- The current move in date is June 1, 2021.

Budget Working Group Assignments

John Ruark explained that the Select board recommended creating a budget working group. The make-up of the group would be 2 members from the School Committee, Finance Committee and

the Selectboard to work on budget scenarios based on the state budget numbers. The working group would work on ways to make up the shortfall. SusanMary Redinger and Sharlene Cronin were appointed by John Ruark to serve on the budget working group with no objection.

Agenda Items

K- refund
Special Education Classroom
Booster Policy
Contract ratification
Transportation – Devens athletics
Budget Update

Approval of Meeting Minutes

With no objection the Chair, John Ruark approved the minutes of the March 23th meeting as presented.

Liaison/Sub-committee Reports

Sharlene Cronin reported that the Parks & Rec Committee met and discussed summer plans with regards to the beach opening. Dan Daly talked about field work taking place. Bob O’Shea and Darren Magan have been appointed to Parks & Rec Committee. Darren Magan will begin working with DPW on field work. The field assessment report will be used to prioritize field work and how that will impact use for sports. It will be important for the school to stay plugged in to those conversations.

Maureen Babcock reported that DEAC met and they will not be sending out an education survey until next year. They will focus their efforts on the newsletter. DEAC wishes to compliment Chef Paul and his staff for the efforts and care in providing meals to families in need.

Suzanne Allen reported that SEPAC met and tabled most things on the agenda at this time. Marie Harrington and many of the Special Education staff attended the meeting. It was nice to see the collaboration between teachers and parents.

Shannon Molloy had nothing additional to add as budget and policy information has already been shared.

SusanMary Redinger reported that TBS School Council still has not met.

John Ruark had nothing additional to report.

School Committee Commentary

Suzanne Allen was so impressed with the district wide presentation with Enes Kantar from the Boston Celtics. She was super proud of the question’s students asked. It was a very cool opportunity.

Maureen Babcock looks forward to supporting seniors at the end of their Bromfield careers. Her heart goes out to all of the students.

SusanMary Redinger thanks and appreciates the Bromfield faculty for all the work they have done and continue to do during this time of distance learning. She is very appreciative of the feedback and is proud of how the district is handling things.

John Ruark reminded School Committee members about the School Committee self-evaluation and adding it to an upcoming agenda.

Executive Session

Executive Session pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 30A section 21 (a) and (3) for the following purposes:

To discuss strategy with respect to an in preparation for collective bargaining with the Harvard Teachers' Association because an open discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee

Suzanne Allen made the motion and SusanMary Redinger seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

VOTE

Allen (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye), Ruark (Aye)

Respectfully submitted

Mary Zadroga

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