

School Committee Minutes
Virtual Meeting
February 8, 2021
6:15 p.m.

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

Others in attendance and Linda Dwight, Josh Myler, Scott Hoffman, Robin Benoit, Dori Pulizzi, Peggy Bragg, and Deb Walker.

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

Taylor Caroom read the Vision Statement.

Public Commentary:

Nate Finch, Codman Hill Road – Reading Curriculum

Amy Bassage – Littleton Road, Harvard – COVID-19 quarantine timeline

Donna Guarino – 45 Candleberry Lane, Harvard – Learning model

Jerry Juliano – 11 Mettacomett Path, Harvard – Learning model

Jessica Reynolds – 84 East Bare Hill Road, Harvard – COVID-19 quarantine timeline

School Business Manager Hiring Update (VOTE)

Dr. Dwight introduce Ingrid Nilsson as her recommended candidate to be hired for the position of School Business Manager. Ms. Nilsson comes to us from the town of Westford where she has served as the School Business manager and also served on the Finance Committee for 10 years.

Shannon Molloy made the motion and Suzanne Allen seconded to approve the recommendation of Dr. Dwight's to hire Ingrid Nilsson for the position of School Business Manager.

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

Student Report:

Brooke Caroom – Bromfield is hosting a Coffee House this Wednesday. It was planned as a live performance but has been changed to prerecorded performances.

*The Bromfield students have started attending remote afternoon classes four days per week with both cohorts, it has been going very well.

*The Middle School Student Council hosted an activity last week, students were glad to be together and it is good to see that students are promoting activities.

*A Trivia night was hosted on Friday night. There were 13 teams made up of students, families community members and staff.

Taylor Caroom reported that there was a Model UN conference this past week that went very well. It was an intense weekend for everyone involved but it was a great time

*The Debate team attended a tournament last week; the two participants qualified for the national tournament in May.

*There have been several students accepted into the All State Festival for singing.

*Student Lin Lin Yu won a Gold Key from the MFA for the piece of art work she submitted.

*Taylor Caroom attended the Students for Justice Activism panel on Friday. It went really well and it was great to hear from students from other schools and the Massachusetts community.

Superintendent Report:

See Attached

Student Survey Results Review

Dr. Dwight reviewed the feedback of the January student survey which was sent out to remote and hybrid students. The feedback from remote students showed that improvement has been made in the areas related to expectations, resources, assignments, access and participation. The feedback from hybrid students showed improvement in areas of mask wearing, daily expectations, resources, assignments, and access. The surveys are helpful and we will do one or two more this year.

HES English Language Arts Presentation

Josh Myler led the curriculum presentation of the English Language Arts program at Hildreth Elementary School. Peggy Bragg and Deb Walker reported on the core resources used in reading instruction, reading assessments and reading intervention services.

COVID Testing, Contact Tracing and Screening Update

Dr. Dwight reviewed the contact tracing policy currently being used in Harvard. Close contacts are identified by the school nurses, staff and the Nashoba Board of Health. Following CDC guidance, a close contact is identified as a contact that is within 6 feet of an individual with Covid 19 when symptomatic or 48 hours before developing symptoms or testing positive for 15 minutes consecutively or nonconsecutively over 24 hours. Close contacts can be from exposure in school or outside of school. The Policy Subcommittee will be updating the COVID tracing chart.

Dr. Dwight reported that the fifth week of COVID screening took place today. The plan for after vacation will be testing on Monday and Tuesday. We are working on a chart that can be sent out to families that will tell families how many tests were done each week with a breakdown of test results. Families should consider their travel plans over the vacation week in order to meet the guidelines of testing before returning to school.

Shannon Molloy has been working as a school committee member and a school committee subgroup of the “Safer Teachers Safer Students” group which is a collaboration between the Broad Institute, the schools and all of the vendors who offer testing. They have completed a consensus document for school committees to educate them on how to get on board with testing. This document will be sent out to all School Committees through MASC and all superintendent through MASS. It will serve as a resource for school districts going forward.

HES School Improvement Plan Review

Josh Myler and Dori Pulizzi reviewed and updated the Hildreth School Improvement Plan. They identified each goal and updated the committee on the progress being made.

Student Achievement goals:

Math Curriculum Review – reviewing pilot programs to use next year.

The Master Schedule – is pending on a determination of the learning model and space requirements for the fall.

Personal Growth goal:

COVID Response – shared resources at curriculum night, parent coffees with guidance department, newsletter and update of guidance website.

Partnership and Resources

Building Project – walkthrough held with NV5 to plan for moving and schedule. Have begun the process of packing and removing old items.

School Climate

Sub-separate Classroom – 3 students currently in SAIL sub-separate classroom.

Other Updates were given for ongoing initiatives; physical activity and mindfulness, teacher leadership opportunities, student leadership opportunities, culture of inclusion and coteaching.

District Improvement Plan

Dr. Dwight presented a mid-year update/status on each of the District Improvement Plan goals.

Student Achievement

Remote Teaching and Learning – collected feedback with surveys, adding Wednesdays to HES, streaming more classes, more consistency using remote tools and Google Classroom, testing for COVID, teacher's participation in 12 professional development days of training. Principals are doing observations of teachers during their remote classes.

School Climate

Antiracism- student participated in one survey, gathered information from them in faculty/student discussion forums, teachers have participated in 3 trainings so far this year with another one planned in March, the Social Justice standards were woven into curriculum planning during the professional development day in January.

Anti-Racism Work Update/Job Description DEI Coordinator (VOTE)

Dr. Dwight presented the feedback she received from the Students for Justice Club, DEI, Arm and Arm and the Alumni group with regard to the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Coordinator job description. Dr. Dwight is recommending to start the DEI Coordinator as a stipend position and hopes that in the next budget cycle, if it is the vision of the committee, we could advocate to move this position to full time. Shannon Molloy asked that we not forget the "Open Letter" request that we bring in an outside consultant. Dr. Dwight will need to meet with the HTA to determine the stipend amount.

Sharlene Cronin made the motion and Suzanne Allen seconded to move to approve the job description for the DEI Coordinator position as presented.

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

Policy Review

The Committee reviewed the policy on responding to known or suspected COVID-19 cases. Discussion was held around changing the protocols when COVID-19 cases are present in the school or district. Under consideration is to remove section 2, 3, and 4 of the protocol which identifies the number of positive students in a grade level that requires a switch to remote.

Abby Besse made the motion and Shannon Molloy seconded to strike item 2, 3, and 4 from the policy on when the district would go remote.

VOTE Allen (Nay), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye).

The Policy Subcommittee will review the changes at their next meeting and bring back a revised document to the February 22nd meeting.

Grant Approval

The PTO Appleseed grant in the amount of \$3,500 was presented for approval. The grant is given to the Hildreth Elementary School to be used by classroom teachers to purchase items for their classrooms.

With no objection SusanMary Redinger approved the grant as submitted.

Future Meeting Dates

Wednesday, February 10th – Finance Committee/School Committee

February 22nd

March 8th

Agenda Items

Survey response narrative

Grade comparison

Policy

Bromfield School Improvement Plan

Financial Report

Minutes

With no objection, SusanMary Redinger approved the minutes as amended.

Liaison and Subcommittee - Tabled

Public Commentary

Sue Voute, 95 Bolton Road, Harvard, MA – COVID-19 guidelines

Jessica Reynolds, 84 East Bare Hill Road, Harvard, MA – contract tracing

School Committee Commentary

None

Adjournment:

At 9:40 p.m. SusanMary Redinger made the motion and Sharlene Cronin seconded that we adjourn into executive session pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A section 2 for the purposes to discuss strategy with respect to and in preparation for collective bargaining with Harvard Teachers' Association because an open discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee. We will not be returning to open session.

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

