

***Hanover School Committee Meeting Minutes
November 13, 2019
Hanover High School***

Present: Mrs. Leah Miller, Mrs. Ruth Lynch, Mr. John Geary and Mrs. Libby Corbo

Also Present: Matthew Ferron, Thomas Raab, Deborah St. Ives, Keith Guyette, Matthew Paquette, Daniel Birolini, Michael Oates, Jane DeGrenier, Joel Barrett and Officer John Voekel

Absent: Mrs. Kimberly Booker

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Mrs. Miller

Public Comment: None presented

Approval Minutes:

Motion by Geary to approve the June 18, 2019 School Committee General Session minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Lynch. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Lynch to approve the September 11, 2019 School Committee General Session minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Geary. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Lynch to approve the September 25, 2019 School Committee General Session minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Geary. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Lynch to approve the October 9, 2019 School Committee General Session minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Corbo. Geary abstained. The motion carried.

Mrs. Lynch thanked the efforts of the Administration for a seamless transition of the Executive Assistant position and the School Committee Recording Secretary in providing timely access to the meeting minutes.

Report of the Superintendent presented by Mr. Ferron:

- **Events and Updates** – Hanover Performing Arts Company previewed “You’re a Good Man Charlie Brown” for the School Committee Board members and attending community. The production will take place on October 22nd and 23rd at the high school.
- **M.A.S.S. Superintendent Award Presentation** – Presented by Hanover High School Principal, Mr. Matthew Paquette. He commended them on their kindness, intelligence and attention to community service. The 2019 Hanover Superintendent Award was presented to Isabella Craft and Nicholas Colaw.

Report of Finance Department Presented by Dr. Thomas Raab:

- **FY '20 Budget Update** – The budget transfers that were approved on September 11, 2019 have been incorporated and the same bottom line total voted at town meeting, \$29,218,627, remains. The percentage spent and encumbered to date is as expected at 32.17% percent of the budget. Journal Entry Corrections will be filed with the Town to properly categorize the spending at Center School. Special Education expenses are reporting at \$-297,902.88, simply due to a lack of spending in the 240 Grant or Circuit Breaker. Spending will be moved from the budget to the 240 Grant and Circuit Breaker during the school year in order to maximize 240 Grant spending and possibly have funds available to roll over into the FY 2021 budget from Circuit Breaker.

- **FY '21 Budget Development Timeline 1.0** – The following is a snapshot of the document that can be found on the Town of Hanover website:
 - AUG-OCT 19: Finalize Strategic Objectives/Goals, Evaluate FY 2020 Budget status and progress.
 - November 2019: Principals/Directors work to prioritize needs; Leadership Team evaluates personnel and expense needs for alignment with strategic objectives; and Preliminary projections for SC on November 13th.
 - December 2019: Full Leadership Team meetings to review options; Superintendent and Town Manager review projections and begin planning process; Assistant Superintendent for Business & Finance and Superintendent prepare personnel and expense strategies; and Budget Subcommittee meets to review progress
 - January 2020: Budget 1.0 draft documents to School Committee on January 8th; Presentation of FY 2021 Budget 1.0 to School Committee on January 22nd; and Development of budget options for Version 2.0+.
 - February 2020: School Committee review and evaluation; Advisory Committee meetings as invited; and Staff and community communication/updates.
 - March 2020: Increase community awareness and engagement; Public Hearing on the FY 2021 Budget (March 11th); School Committee vote to support budget; and Advisory Committee Presentation
 - April 2020: Ongoing communication between School Committee, Town Manager, Board of Selectmen, and Advisory Committee; and Review and evaluation of budget options
 - May 2020: Town Meeting
- **Donations** – Donations totaling \$2,461.50 were received from Arbella Insurance Foundation, Patrick Coffey & Hanover Teachers Association for the Washington DC Trip and Baystate Textiles.

Mrs. Lynch questioned whether the Washington DC donations were known when the trip was planned. Dr. Raab replied that they were not and they are used to offset financial needs and activities while on the trip.

Motion by Lynch to approve the Donations in the amount of \$2,461.50 as written. The motion was seconded by Geary. The vote carried unanimously.

Report of the Superintendent presented by Mr. Ferron (continued):

- **Events and Updates** – Veteran's Day ceremonies took place at all the Hanover schools. Active duty veterans and retired service members participated in these meaningful ceremonies. The HHS National Honor Society Induction took place for members who excel in leadership, character and community service. The Cedar School rededication of the Nicole Henry Playground took place along with the Henry Family's participation. Many additional events coming up, consult the District Calendar for dates.
- **Class Size Update** – Seeing the benefit of the grade school consolidation, no class size is greater than twenty-two students. Enrollment is stable and consistent, but always welcoming new students to the town of Hanover. High School Advanced Placement enrollment is closely monitored. Full enrollment is noted on all newly added courses. A detailed Master Schedule can be found on the school's website.

Mrs. Miller questioned whether high school teacher workloads are considered in determining class size. Mr. Ferron replied that they do look at that.

Mrs. Lynch appreciated the fact that there is almost an equal number of honors classes versus the standard level in many subjects.

Mrs. Corbo questioned whether a larger class size in a core class does not permit student interaction. Mr. Ferron commented that teachers understand the workload that accompanies certain classes and that advanced level classes tend to attract a more independent student.

SAT Action Plan (HHS) – Presented by Mr. Paquette. This document can be found in its entirety on the Town of Hanover website. Improving SAT and other standardized test performance are at the center of Hanover High School’s Improvement Plan. The following are four goals for Hanover:

- Assess – Students are assessed by using exams (MCAS, PSAT, SAT, AP & internally)
- Analyze – Data accumulated is analyzed to acquire a clear knowledge of strengths and areas needed for improvement
- Plan – Classroom strategies and lessons are based on these findings
- Implement – Subject-area teachers implement strategies for test improvements
Hanover plans to offer a “Bootcamp”: according to the following plan:
- Concept – Monitored SAT practice through Khan Academy program
- Schedule – Before and after school (days/times TBD)
- Summary - Students gain 20+ hours of practice

Mrs. Miller questioned whether the teachers would be familiar with the subjects that are covered within the exam. Mr. Paquette responded that the teachers who help would not be just the content area teachers and that all teachers assist with the SAT preparation.

Mrs. Miller inquired what other schools in the area are doing to increase their SAT scores. Mr. Paquette commented that schools differ on what they offer. In addition, no other school, that he is aware of, would offer what Hanover is hoping to.

Mrs. Miller asked if the general tips are available for students and families to help prepare and increase scores for the SATs. Mr. Paquette replied that immediate improvement would come from familiarizing ourselves with the current SAT test and to know the general test taking strategies.

Mr. Geary questioned whether students are advised to participate in both morning and afternoon “Bootcamp” sessions. Mr. Paquette replied that he wants to offer multiple times to fit all student schedules. Mr. Geary questioned the success of the Khan Academy’s two-hour increments versus Hanover’s micro sessions. Mr. Paquette replied that shorter, repetitive sessions when learning the exam is more beneficial than just six, two hour, sessions.

Mrs. Lynch commends the school’s plan on improving the overall test scores. She questioned how many participating students would actually increase the school’s test scores above state average. In addition, she questioned whether there is an expense for this effort. Mr. Paquette replied that he is exercising an expense fund for this offering. Mrs. Lynch questioned whether the curriculum is influencing the test scores. Mr. Paquette believes that the school has not done enough and hopes to align the curriculum with the intent to improve SAT scores. Regardless the number of students who participate, a demonstrated success will be shown through accumulated data. Mrs. Lynch replied that curriculum must be assessed if scores do not improve.

Mrs. Lynch questioned the maximum number of students who can participate in the “Bootcamp” sessions. Mr. Paquette replied that all of eleventh and twelfth grade can be serviced within the high school.

Mrs. Lynch questioned as to why this effort could not be applied during actual school classes. Mr. Paquette responded that class scheduling and school time would be altered. Mrs. Lynch hopes that data will be compiled to show its success and therefore help students with the college acceptance process.

Mrs. Miller commented that those students who are in the lower math classes do not reach all that is assessed in the SAT Math portion of the test. She is inquiring as to how many times the student takes the exam. Mr. Paquette commented that typically students take the exam two times.

Mr. Ferron added that Hanover is offering a structured disciplined approach to improve their SAT scores. He added that college choice is subjective and depends on many factors surrounding a students' situation.

Mrs. Lynch questioned whether the Administration is hearing feedback from families regarding Hanover's need for SAT improvement. Mr. Ferron replied yes and the district strives to give every student the opportunity to attend a college of their choice, if desired.

Mrs. Corbo appreciated the Committee's comments. She questioned the reason why Hanover students do not get into the top twenty-five universities in the US. She questioned whether the top local schools were contacted regarding their SAT success. Mr. Paquette replied that a response was through a query and it was not mandatory. Mr. Plummer added that each school that replied had their own individualized SAT plan.

Mrs. Corbo questioned whether all students that are interested in this offer would be serviced or the potential for a lottery. Mr. Plummer replied that all interested students will be able to participate. Mr. Geary noted that this is an early endeavor and we trust in the school's plan. Mrs. Corbo added that the curriculum must be missing a piece resulting in Hanover's low scores.

Mrs. Geary questioned how many Hanover students take advantage of outside sources for SAT improvement compared to the successful towns. Mr. Paquette replied that he does not have that information. In addition, Mr. Geary added that knowing the amount of family income spent on services would be beneficial.

Mrs. Corbo questioned as to when a survey regarding interest in this program would be sent out. Mr. Paquette replied that the sooner the better. Mrs. St. Ives commented that offering students the ability to comprehend at a young age would benefit them in the later grades when standardized testing is required. The Administration is acting with a sense of urgency to offer students the ability to improve their SAT scores.

Mrs. Miller applauds READ 2700 and the joy of reading. Mrs. St. Ives noted that with research the Administration will provide the necessary curriculum for success.

Report on Teaching and Learning:

- **School Improvement Plan Presentation** – This document can be found in its entirety on the Town of Hanover website.
 - *Goal #1 (Presented by Michael Oates):* To advance and improve coaching and mentoring for teachers by collaborating to provide personalized mentoring, and differentiated support for all teachers, it will increase the expertise and capacity of our staff resulting in improved student outcomes.
 - *Goal #2 (Presented by Jane DeGrenier):* To advance and improve professional development and peer mentoring for all staff by engaging in a contemporary approach to focused professional development and coaching, the expertise and capacity of our staff will increase and result in improved student outcomes.
 - *Goal #3 (Presented by Daniel Birolini):* To improve student performance based on relevant and timely data by strategically and intentionally using data to inform instructional and curricular decisions priorities will be set based on student need resulting in improved student outcomes.
 - *Goal #4 (Presented by Matthew Paquette):* To ensure vertical and horizontal alignment of expectations and experiences for students by effectively aligning and implementing the district curriculum with the revised standards as outlined in the Massachusetts

Curriculum Frameworks, all students will be provided with equitable experiences and opportunities to improve student outcomes.

- *Goal #5/Safety Training (Presented by Officer John Voekel)*: To increase school safety and maintain campus security by continuing to enhance training for staff, students and the community, increase school safety and maintain a Cedar campus that is secure and prepared for emergencies.
- *Goal #5/Substance Abuse Education (Presented by Joel Barrett)*: To provide educational opportunities for all students regarding the dangers of vaping and substance abuse; increase school safety and maintain campus security.
- *Goal #6 (Presented by Michael Oates)*: To develop and brand Cedar School as an early learning center by providing a developmentally appropriate, rich learning environment, Implement plans that will meet the individual social-emotional, physical, language and educational needs of all students.

Mrs. Miller commented on Goal #6, the Cedar school's entrance will be a great addition.

Mrs. Lynch questioned changing the name. Mr. Oates added that a name change was discussed in the prior year and would be revisited this year.

Mrs. Lynch appreciated the worthwhile presentation and its ease of following. She noted that the statement "affective and rigorous standard based units of instruction that reflect high expectations regarding content, quality and effort" were mentioned in all the goals.

She questioned the use of "common assessments" as being an old or new platform. Mr. Paquette replied that they have been around for some time but not specific to SAT skills. She questioned what among the teacher evaluation system is being looked at from prior years. Mr. Paquette replied that administrator/teacher one-on-one time is being evaluated. She appreciated the feedback gained from announced classroom administrator drop-ins. Mrs. St. Ives noted that this was the reason for separating Goal's 1 and 2.

Mr. Geary commented on Goal #1 and #2 for all buildings involved. He noted that the non-monetary value of the implemented improvements should be passed on to the community and with teachers and staff when discussing union negotiations.

Mrs. Corbo appreciated the concise presentation. She questioned who the survey audience would be for the goals within the middle school. Mr. Birolini replied that it could be parents, teachers and any stakeholders.

Mrs. Miller noted the vertical alignment of Goal #3 at the middle school and the work being done on Read 2700 at Center School. She questioned who would be implementing the improvements. Mr. Birolini replied that there would be formalization of this process at the teacher level. Mrs. St. Ives added that the professional development time filled up quickly and serves as an avenue for teacher feedback.

Mrs. Miller appreciated the vertical alignment of Goal #3 READ 2700 within the high school as well.

- **Strategic Objectives Update** – Per Mr. Ferron, this objective will be discussed during the first meeting in January. Also, Mrs. Booker will discuss the Traffic Study during the December 7th meeting.

Action Items:

- No items at this time

Public Comment: None presented

The next School Committee meeting is scheduled for December 4, 2019 at Hanover High School. Expected agenda items will be: SEPAC Update, HHS: MCAS/SAT/AP Presentation, Health and Wellness Update, FY'20 Budget Update and Traffic Study Committee Update.

Motion by Lynch to adjourn at 9:12pm. The motion was seconded by Geary. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Tara L. Wakefield

Tara L. Wakefield

Recording Secretary for the Hanover School Committee

Documents Used:

Class Size Update (K-12)
FY '20 Budget Update
FY '21 Budget Development Timeline 1.0
Donations
School Improvement Plan Presentation
Strategic Objectives Update (Community Engagement
& Safety and Security)

Appendix A
Appendix B
Appendix C
Appendix D
Appendix E
Appendix F