

Hanover School Committee Meeting Minutes
May 26, 2021
Hybrid Meeting
7:00 PM

Present: Mrs. Leah Miller, Mrs. Ruth Lynch, Mrs. Libby Corbo, Mr. Pete Miraglia, and Mrs. Ryan Hall

Also Present: Matthew Ferron, Debbie St. Ives, Patricia Smith, Keith Guyette, Daniel Birolini, Jane DeGrenier, Michael Oates, Matthew Plummer

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM by Mrs. Miller.

Public Comment: None

Approval of Minutes:

May 12, 2021: Motion entertained by Mrs. Miller to approve the May 12, 2021 *School Committee Minutes* as written. The motion was moved by Mrs. Lynch and seconded by Mrs. Corbo. The motion carried unanimously.

Report of the Superintendent presented by Mr. Ferron:

Today Chick-fil-A of greater Boston in partnership with the Boston Celtics had a program called “Threes for three hundred.” The Celtics scored twelve three-pointers the other night. So greater Boston Chick-Fil-A donated three hundred Chick-fil-A sandwiches to the Hanover High School which fed our seniors. Thank you to Chick-fil-A and the Boston Celtics.

Tomorrow or Friday, we will be introducing the Cedar School Interim Principal for next year. This was finalized today. This will be announced publicly once the Cedar staff is introduced. Mr. Oates will set up this meeting via zoom for about five minutes and then it will be announced early next week to the parents.

Science Fair Participants - Mr. Matthew Plummer: We are super proud of three students who participated in the Science Fair. We have Jamie Parry a current junior in the class of 2022, Ashley Stracco a freshman in the class of 2024, and Daniel Nguyen a sophomore in the class of 2023. Jamie Parry: experimented with the light transmission through a ski goggle lens. A sensor was set up outside each day for about a week, then he took different readings on how much light would pass through the ski google lens. This experiment came to light because of his interest in skiing and his work at a ski shop by taking some real-world stuff he likes to do and applying it at the Science Fair. Ashley Stracco: her Science Fair project, she noted the effects of vitamins A, C, D, and E on E Coli bacteria. For this experiment, she had to grow E Coli bacteria in the plates then by dropping vitamins on the plates she was able to see which had the greatest effects on the E Coli bacteria. It was a great experience and she hopes to continue her project. Daniel Nguyen placed 3rd in the State Science Fair. The highest in Hanover as far as we know. He worked on creating accessible and 3D printable prosthetics. He specifically worked on designing a 3D hand. The objective of this was to make a prosthetic that was affordable to most people. The problem in our community is that people who do have disabilities and are missing limbs have trouble participating in everyday activities. A lot of the prosthetics are extremely unaffordable. Daniel demonstrated his project for the School Committee.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Miller: Which vitamin worked the best?

Ms. Stracco: Vitamin E worked the best.

Mrs. Lynch: What was the reaction of the judges?

Mr. Nguyen: I think what makes my project stand out is the different approach taken. I went with an unconventional design compared to others in the market today.

Mrs. Miller: What made you interested in this?

Mr. Nguyen: My grandmother had a stroke so it inspired me to want to create a method for people to reuse limbs again. Because of the stroke, she lost any movement in her left arm. From then on, I thought about how you make a prosthetic hand and it inspired me to pursue this.

Mrs. Lynch: Do you see yourself pursuing this after you leave Hanover High?

Mr. Nguyen: Yes, I do.

This project inspired me to pursue robotics and engineering and I wanted to combine it with my passion for computer science.

Mr. Plummer: How did you find out about computer science?

Mr. Nguyen: What interested me is I had worked on a Science Fair project a couple of years ago and one of the things that puzzled me the most was programming the microcontroller. It was programming that caused me a lot of trouble with the project. This is the reason I wanted to pursue courses at Hanover High School and I was fortunate that they provided Computer Science Principles. This year I took Computer Science Java. I want to expand upon the STEM extracurriculars in Hanover. I feel like a lot of middle school students are missing out on this opportunity to discover and expand their passion for science.

Mrs. Miller: Didn't you win the Science Fair when you were in 8th grade and what was the project?

Mr. Nguyen: I won 2nd place. I worked on creating a new form of energy. I was inspired by generators, how they worked, and the fact that we have to use fossil fuels to activate them. I used electromagnets instead of fossil fuels to activate a generator. As the generator is in motion and uses electricity initially, it can then produce enough electricity to, later on, use that electricity while also producing more of it.

Mr. Miraglia: Good job on getting it to work in front of everyone. A very inspiring project. Also, I have been impressed with the Science Fairs at the Center and Middle School. Unfortunate, that there was not one this year.

Mr. Plummer: These three students are a credit to us, themselves, and their families. They do a really good job. Not only are they bright and inquisitive in science, but they are also excellent orators. Their well-roundedness shines through in everything they do. We are extremely proud of them.

Mrs. Corbo: Remarkable that with the challenging year that these students are still challenging themselves. Thank you for being leaders.

COVID Health Update-Mrs. Patricia Smith: Congrats to Ashely, Jaime and Daniel!

COVID-19 data continues to trend well over the past two weeks in both town-wide and school data and I'm happy to report there were no new cases reported in the past 7 days. As you know, last week DESE and MDPH announced that the risk of transmission of COVID-19 in outdoor settings is considered low and students no longer need to a mask when outdoors for recess, PE, athletics, or outdoor academic settings. Also, students who were in close contact in an outdoor setting with a person who was considered infectious with COVID-19 do not have to quarantine. As you can imagine, this was a very happy development for our school community. Pooled testing continues to indicate a very low rate of infection in our schools, with a weekly test positive rate of 0.2%. As usual, we will continue to monitor the data and trends, as well as any new updates in DESE guidance.

As you know, the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine was authorized through emergency use authorization by the FDA for individuals 12 and over. So far, we have received many reports from families that they have opted for the vaccine for their child. The use of the vaccine for children and adolescents over the age of 12 is supported by the CDC, the MDPH, and the American Academy of Pediatrics. At this time, there is no recommendation for a mandatory vaccine for attendance at school. We understand some parents may be hesitant and we encourage families to visit the CDC and MDPH websites for information and consult with their healthcare providers and pediatricians to help make a decision that is best for their child.

The policy statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics has been released and states that the AAP recommends the COVID-19 vaccination for all children and adolescents 12 years of age or older who do not have contraindications using a COVID-19 vaccine authorized for use for their age and given the importance of routine vaccination and the need for rapid uptake of COVID-19 vaccines, the AAP supports coadministration of routine childhood and adolescent immunizations with COVID-19 vaccines.

Again, there is no recommendation for a mandatory vaccination with the COVID-19 vaccine at this time and it continues to be a parental choice. We are pleased to offer opportunities for vaccination for our school community. Currently, we have 87 students, staff, and families registered for the Pfizer vaccine clinic which is being held at Hanover High School tomorrow from 1:00 - 6:00 PM. We still have some availability, so if anyone in our school community is looking for a vaccine, please register using the link that went out earlier this week, or you may contact me directly.

Questions:

Mrs. Corbo: You mentioned that you were receiving a report from parents that they have vaccinated their children? Is it required that the parents report to the schools whether or not they are vaccinated?

Mrs. Smith: Yes, we have received reports from parents that their children are vaccinated. No, there is no requirement. Parents are welcome to share. It is information that we like to have and it is good to know for planning purposes and to understand what is happening in our community.

Mrs. Corbo: When did we ask them that they share this information?

Mrs. Smith: We asked in letters that went out for the registration of the Marshfield Clinic. Also, if they were absent due to having been vaccinated, we asked that they bring a record of the vaccination.

Mrs. Miller: It is a parent's decision. We are not saying that Hanover is pressuring you to get your child vaccinated. The School Committee wants to assure people it is the parent's decision.

Mrs. Smith: That is correct. We encourage parents to read and consult with their health care provider. We support families in whatever decision they make.

Mrs. Miller: It is not mandated for children yet but parents can advocate either way by reaching out to Governor Baker, The Department of Public Health, and DESE.

Mr. Miraglia: Are we anticipating getting the vaccines to be rolled out for children under 12 in the near future?

Mrs. Smith: It is being studied but there is no information at this time.

MASC Training-Mrs. Miller: Over the course of the last few months, Mrs. Miller has been on a group zoom with other chairs of other School Communities in the South Shore area. One of the pieces of training that come up is the MASC training. Some of the other Districts have had them come in and offer this training. It has been five years and Mrs. Miller has never had training. Now we have two new committee members. It may be a good thing for the School Committee to do and it is free as it is included with the Committee's annual dues. Our

Representative sent some ideas and one of them is Protocols and Best Practices for effective School Committee meetings. It is a 2 two-hour session training that is live. There are other ones like Collective Bargaining. As a School Committee, we should have goals that we have not had in a while. He can schedule the session around our schedule.

Questions/Comments:

Mr. Miraglia: As a new member, you only get “Charting the Course” which is just fundamentals. Great idea.

Mrs. Miller: We will develop the training with him and he will include best practices. I will reach out to you for dates.

Mrs. Lynch: The title is kind of throwing me a bit.

Mrs. Miller: It is “Best Protocols for School Committee meetings.” The norms for operating as a School Committee member will also be included.

Student Handbooks-Mrs. Miller:

Student Handbooks will be postponed until a future meeting so we have more time to review them.

Questions: None

Report of Finance Department presented by Dr. Raab: None

Comments:

Dr. Raab is not here due to his daughter Meaghan Raab an HHS alumnus is graduating from the United States Air Force as a 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Air Force. She will be attending medical school at Dartmouth in the fall. Congratulations to Meaghan and the Raab Family.

Questions: None

Report on Teaching and Learning

Preliminary COVID Recovery Update presented by Mr. Ferron: We will be covering how we will be using the ESSER III funds. The tangible money that we feel confident about is approximately \$420,000 of an ESSER III grant that is going to come free in the new fiscal year. We are committed to the following:

- Maintaining the current staffing in our Health Services Department. We are supporting our nurse’s office with support staff, a nurse in the middle school, and whatever Mrs. Smith and her team need to get us through the next year. That will help support the health and safety of the students because we do not know what will happen in the fall. Most likely half of our students will not be vaccinated and COVID will not be gone. We know as we go through this recovery it has been stressful. There are social-emotional, social wellness, and mental health issues. Our Health Services Staff, although not formally tasked with this, handles a lot of those issues.
- Mrs. St. Ives discussed at a previous meeting about the Summer Programs we are planning. Those are in full swing and should be announced in the next few days.
- We are also looking at the After School Support Programs for next year.
- These would be free programs in health and other recovery areas as necessary.
- Looking at social emotion supports for students to support our counseling teams. Whether this is staff we have in the building every day or we contract outside services. We are looking at different options. This is something our counseling teams throughout the district are looking at.

- We learned a lot in the pandemic like things we have done well and things we need to get better at. We want to use this opportunity to bring a Teacher Leadership Team together which is similar to Department Head in other districts. This will bring a whole new set of voices and a new approach.

Those are the big things in terms of using the ESSER funding for next year. When we present our goals this summer, it will all be tied to this and there will be specifics and details that go with it. Right now, we are trying to get everyone through MCAS and get through the end of the school year. The teachers are working hard and understand that it was a challenging year for everyone. All the work that was done from last March to this March, the Hanover kids were in school more than most other places. We have to catch up on our own and we are learning from the experience. It is going to make us stronger in the next few years. Mrs. St. Ives and her team are putting in countless hours to make this recovery successful. We will try things that are not great and some things will turn out better than we expected. If we get another relief package on top of the ESSER III funding, Mrs. St. Ives and her team are already working on other options to present to our School Committee, teachers, and communities. For the next couple of years, we may have some resources available to us that we would not have been able to do. Unfortunately, we had to go through a pandemic to get there.

Mrs. St. Ives: We are trying to be as inflexible and thoughtful in our planning but also anticipate different opportunities. The people doing this work even around literacy are teaching our kids all day but we are also trying to pull the resources, network, and make the telephone calls for opportunities that might present themselves to us. We are trying to be as organized as we can so we are ready to make some of those decisions. We want to act with the urgency that is necessary but not be impulsive. This does not happen all the time especially in education where you get really good high-quality resources. We have an incredible team that we need to thank for the hours and hours they are putting in outside of their workday. We are doing the work now so we are ready.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Miller: Have you guys had time to get think about the Math portion? What they did not get through? What they did not master?

Mrs. St. Ives: There is a lot of research around that. If you are teaching 3rd grade, you do not go back and teach the middle of 2nd grade but you have to fill in the gaps and accelerate the learning. DESE sent out their roadmap for acceleration and learning yesterday which was shared with all of the principals. It is a lot of good sound research on how to do this differently than what we may have thought ten years ago and with positive intent. The research is telling us that we have to have a solid assessment system in place so we can remediate the gaps. You do not want to have any lag in the presentation of the curriculum. You don't want to adjust your benchmarks. Kids are supposed to be where they are. The "Road Map" is a great look at it. We don't know where the kids are at yet and we have to meet them where they are at then move forward. Some of these leadership positions that Matt is talking about will help us articulate that and guide and support teachers. There is that alignment of expectations with best intentions. Those layers of support are going to help us as we try and figure things out.

Mr. Miraglia: This is great! Hanover is not the only place where a big gap has happened. Very thankful we have the opportunity to put resources towards it. Looking forward to hearing more about it.

Mrs. Corbo: You mentioned solid assessments and having those in place so we can target regression and essentially measure the gaps in learning. What are some of those assessments? Would any of the funds help us in developing a more rigorous assessment plan to measure that regression?

Mrs. St. Ives: We worked hard a couple of years ago compiling an assessment system. What we have in place, is what we need. It assesses all the areas. It gives reliable feedback and is norm-based but then we have another layer of assessments. A lot of them are adaptive which gives us a good guide on where students are falling. We have another layer of assessments that we use when we need to dive deeper to access where a student might be struggling or where the challenges are. For the comprehensive assessments, we use Dibels 8 for K-6 and grades 7 and 8 if at risk and necessary and iReady for grades 2 through 8 for both reading and math. Right now, we are not

talking about adding more assessments to our current plan. We think this is going to be a good guide to see where our kids are at. Several years ago, we had deep discussions about balancing assessment with instructional minutes. We miss instructional minutes in typical typesetting this year that we have to remediate for that. Although we need the data, we cannot start over-assessing again and losing instructional minutes. We plan to go forward with our assessment plan that we typically have three times a year. The high school is a little bit different as they use Albert about three times a year.

Mrs. Corbo: How about for high school students?

Mr. Plummer: The high school uses Albert system three times a year.

Mrs. Corbo: Do parents have access to those?

Mr. Plummer: No

Mrs. Corbo: The parents can get access to iReady?

Mrs. St. Ives: This year we did send the iReady assessment home and we plan to do that moving forward. It is much better communicated when it comes out with parent-teacher conferences so there is an explanation and we are not just sending them home without context. It was not perfect this year with the alignment at conferences at some of the buildings but where it was our first attempt, we decided to just go for it. There were questions from parents but once they sat with the teacher, they were able to review it and understand it better. Moving forward, conferences do not always line up with the fall, winter, and spring benchmarks but we will do our best. Parents can call and request a conference at any time. They do not have to wait for parent-teacher conferences. We do send the iReady and Dibels 8 assessments home.

Mrs. Corbo: No Albert assessments sent home?

Mr. Plummer: Albert does not have that tool.

Mr. Miraglia: Can we expect a lot more homework next year? I understand why there isn't a lot of homework this year.

Mrs. St. Ives: We will be going back to the expectations as in previous years. In the Handbook, we give a guide on how many minutes are expected.

Mrs. Hall: iReady data went home this year. Is it going to go home going forward?

Mrs. St. Ives: Yes, we are hoping as parents keep receiving it that it will not be as confused and the results can go home three times a year. As we transition to Savvas (Pearson), they improved the parent report.

Mrs. Hall: Will there be communication to parents at the beginning of the year on what growth is expected and if there isn't growth what they can expect to hear from the schools?

Mrs. St. Ives:

This time before the report went out the principals included in the emails to expect the reports to come home. It did not say what they should expect because the growth is related to your own score. You can see on the report what typical growth should be.

Mrs. Lynch:

At the high school, it is based on the standards. There is a specific curriculum that is followed. When we are talking about growth at the high school, it cannot be compared to the elementary level. It is not the same focus. It is the student gaining knowledge in specific areas.

Mr. Plummer:

Reviewed Albert with the School Committee.

Mrs. Miller: How often do they do the Albert?

Mr. Plummer:

Pre-pandemic we did it three times a year but this year was up to the teacher. You get a sense of what the students are doing well at and what they need to work on. Interesting when everyone is struggling or killing the class.

Mr. Ferron:

It is a teacher assessment tool.

Mr. Miraglia: What does it cover?

Mr. Plummer: Every subject.

Mrs. Corbo: Do the students have access to that?

Mr. Plummer: Yes. It may be a little different this year with the pandemic. The Albert rep says we are one of the highest users in MA. We answered 22,000 questions last month.

Mr. Ferron: The reason the teachers are using Albert is that it is correlated to the past when we needed to get our assessments up. This is helping with that.

Mrs. Corbo: When a student is in the red zone after two assessments it triggers the teacher to communicate with the parent.

Mr. Plummer: Great idea.

Comments:

Action Items: None

The next School Committee meeting is scheduled for June 9, 2021. Expected agenda items will be COVID Health Update, Fiscal FY '22 budget update, FY '21 budget closeout, Student Handbooks, Board reorganizations, SEPAC

Motion by Lynch to adjourn the open session at 8:03 PM. The motion was seconded by Corbo. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Tahnee Warner

Tahnee Warner

Executive Assistant/ Recording Secretary