

***Hanover School Committee Meeting Minutes
September 22, 2021
Hybrid Meeting
Hanover High School
7:00 PM***

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

Also Present: Matthew Ferron, Debbie St. Ives, Tom Raab, Patricia Smith, Michael Oates, Daniel Birolini, Jane DeGrenier, Garry Pelletier, Matthew Mattos, Matthew Plummer, Kelly Lawrence, Kelly Stukenborg, Mike Perrone, Martha Stamper, Joan Edgar, Jim McNamara, Andrea Hurley, Maura Aborn, Ann Coates, Laura Collins, Shayle Emerson, Ann Galotti

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

Public Comment: None

Approval of Minutes:

August 26, 2021: Motion entertained by Mrs. Miller to approve the August 26, 2021; *School Committee Minutes* as written. The motion was moved by Mr. Miraglia and seconded by Mrs. Lynch. The motion carried unanimously.

September 1, 2021: Motion entertained by Mrs. Miller to approve the September 1, 2021; *School Committee Minutes* as written. The motion was moved by Mr. Miraglia and seconded by Mrs. Lynch. The motion carried unanimously.

September 15, 2021: Motion entertained by Mrs. Miller to approve the September 15, 2021; *School Committee Minutes* as written. The motion was moved by Mr. Miraglia and seconded by Mrs. Lynch. The motion carried unanimously.

Report of the Superintendent:

- **Introduction and Appointment of Interim Business Manager presented by Mr. Matthew Ferron:** Mr. Michael Perrone reached out through School Spring. He has worked locally as a business manager in the past and has held very high-level school finance positions in some of the larger districts in Florida. He has a good story for moving back to the South Shore and is very personable. He is fully certified and credentialed to work in MA, and he already has a relationship with the finance team at DESE and other business managers in MA.

Questions/Comments: None

Motion entertained by Mrs. Miller to appoint Michael Perrone as Interim Business Manager. The motion was moved by Mr. Miraglia and seconded by Mrs. Lynch. The motion carried unanimously.

- **Introduction of Department Heads:** Matthew Plummer stated that he is not an expert in the academic content across all academic disciplines. But with the department heads in place, we now have -- a go-to person -- a subject matter expert in each content area. When a teacher has a new and innovative idea about a way to approach a topic or unit, sometimes they might be hesitant to float that idea. With the department heads in place, the teachers now have another leader that they can go to. In this case, a leader that knows and understands the intricacies within their discipline and the teachers can rely on the

department head to guide them with an eye towards that discipline. Our department heads do not formally evaluate the teachers. It's also important that it is not just the new teacher that will ask questions but the veteran teachers will also ask questions, share ideas, and best practices. Our department heads will be doing many other things, including:

- **Weekly Meetings**-Together with the administration, the department heads have formed a "curriculum team" -- and within each building, they will meet weekly. In three short weeks, a rapport has been established that is helping with communication, procedures, and we are making notes about ways to improve things within the school.
- **Department Meetings**-The department heads will plan and run their own Department Meetings - monthly.
- **Teacher Evaluation Goals**-The department heads will be available to review their teacher's goals and make suggestions when needed.
- **Liaison**-The department heads will serve as a liaison for clarification regarding education plans, 504s and IEPs. The department heads will also serve on the SIT team as needed.
- **NEASC and Other Needs**-The department heads will serve in leadership capacities regarding the NEASC accreditation, as well as other important items -- for example, Back-to-School and Curriculum nights with the parents.
- **Vertical Articulation**-They will work to improve the vertical articulation of the curriculum between grades. Each teacher will have a much better understanding of what is happening in all the prior grades leading up to theirs.
- **Learning Loss-- Curriculum and Standards**-Perform an analysis of the standards covered during the hybrid & remote learning, then support teachers so they can make necessary adjustments as we come out of the pandemic.
- **Progress Monitoring**-Plan and schedule our progress monitoring assessments. Those assessments include MCAS, PSAT, iReady (at HMS), Benchmarks (at HHS), as well as other common assessments. The department heads will also lead the analysis of the results on those assessments and help plan the interventions that teachers might need to put in place within an individual classroom or for an individual student.
- **Curriculum Review**-The department heads will oversee our curriculum review process. Each year, each department will be in one particular phase of the process - Study, Plan, Implement, and Review. The department heads -- together -- will manage how we review our curriculum and make adjustments.
- **Curriculum Documentation**-The department heads will lead the charge in updating (in some cases creating) the documentation of that curriculum to generate helpful public-facing documents that we can put on our website for the community -- the students and parents -- to view.
- **Curriculum Materials**-The department heads will oversee supplies, help procure quotes for materials, help order and distribute those materials, and all the things that normally come along with making sure the teachers have what they need to do the best job possible. The department heads will oversee the creation of robust and dynamic libraries of materials -- organized and shared through Google Drive -- for every course.
- **Master Schedule Building**-This is mostly a high-school thing -- the department heads involved in building the master schedule each year. They have years of experience and can help.
- **Expand Leadership Opportunities**-Within our schools, we want to provide more opportunities for teachers to help lead. The department heads will plan and lead most of what happens within each department -- our data team meetings, schedule changes during add/drop, PD activities, etc. The team you are about to be introduced to is an excellent team -- comprised of subject matter experts, who are smart and hard-working.
- **Meet the Department Heads:**
 - Hanover District Wide and Middle School department heads introduced by Mr. Dan Birolini:
 - District Wide
 - Terry Langton-Health and Wellness
 - Matt Harden-K-12 Fine & Performing Arts

Middle School

- Martha Stamper-ELA
- Joan Edgar-Science
- Jim McNamara-History
- Andrea Hurley-Math
- Hanover High School Department Heads introduced by Mr. Matt Mattos:
 - Maura Aborn-Foreign Languages
 - Ann Coates-Social Studies
 - Laura Collins-English
 - Shayle Emerson-Science and Engineering
 - Ann Galotti-Math and Business.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Miller commented on how important the role of the department head is to the Hanover Teachers Associate and the Administration. She is excited to see the Department Heads in action. She loves when teachers take on leadership roles and that this new role does not take them out of the classroom.

Mrs. Lynch added that this adds a whole new dimension to the building. They are the experts and someone that teachers can go to for advice and help. It is reassuring. Mr. Plummer did a great job explaining the role of the Department Heads and wanted to thank each of them for stepping up and taking the risk so we can all move forward.

- **UMASS Dartmouth Early College Consortium presented by Mr. Ferron:** Mr. Ferron and Mrs. St Ives have been working for a couple of months on the consortium in partnership with UMASS Dartmouth. This will create some pathways for early college courses for students. We already have pathways set up for Quincy College and Massasoit. We have an opportunity to take it up to another level. There are ten school districts on the South Shore and South Coast that are in this together. The districts include Attleboro, Avon, Brockton, East Bridgewater, Easton, Hanover, King Philip, North Attleboro, Norton, and Taunton. We are the innovators. We will be working with UMASS Dartmouth and the other districts over the next several months to see how this will work. The vision is that there will be a college course at UMASS Dartmouth. There could be students from all ten districts in the same class. Some may be virtual. There may be an opportunity for a student to go in person on a Saturday for a course at UMASS Dartmouth. At this time, these courses will be held after school. It was impossible to line them up during the day. This limits us. We have one student taking a course this Fall and two signed up for Spring courses. Our guidance department is looking for courses that are available and fit student schedules. The cost of the course is extremely discounted to start but could be lower depending on how many students enroll. Some of the courses offered this year are Biology, Introduction to Applied Science and Engineering, Introduction to Physics, The Business Organizations, Comparative Politics, and Instructional Drawing.

Questions/Comments:

Mr. Miraglia: Is the first model? Do you think other colleges will jump on board?

Mr. Ferron: We believe there is an expansion compacity.

Mr. Miraglia: Who do they sign up with?

Mr. Ferron: They need to sign up with their guidance counselor. The guidance counselors are trying to recruit. There will be more promotions among the students to get ready for the Spring.

Mrs. Miller: Are there any requirements?

Mr. Ferron: One of the courses has a prerequisite. Physics might have an algebra prerequisite.

Mrs. Lynch: What is the difference between this program and the others we have?

Mr. Ferron: This is a little robust and they will be participating with other students from other districts and college students.

Mrs. Lynch comment that in some school districts there are some restrictions where if the course was offered at the high school, they would not encourage you to take it at a college level. This is advantageous for students to take the UMASS Dartmouth courses because they get college credit as well as high school credit. Conceivably, students could go to college for only three years.

Mrs. Corbo: Do you know how many students are enrolled in Quincy and Massasoit College?

Mr. Ferron: We can get back to you on that.

Mrs. Hall: Would love it if the students could come to a School Committee meeting and share their experience.

Mr. Ferron: Absolutely.

Mrs. Corbo wanted to let parents of juniors and seniors know that the guidance department put together a great list of pre-college and college summer programs. These are available to all students but there might be some requirements that need to be met. Some of these carry over as college credits.

- **Health Services and Testing Updated presented by Mrs. Smith:** Since September 1, there have been 68 new confirmed cases of COVID-19 infection in the town of Hanover. The incidence rate has remained stable ranging from 21 - 24/100,000. The test positivity rate has also been stable at 4.5 - 4.6% over the past three weeks. There have been 17 new COVID-19 infections among our students and staff since the start of school, and only one confirmed case in the past 7 days. Nine of those were present in school during the infectious period. As a result, 47 individuals at school were identified as susceptible close contacts, and 45 of those opted to participate in the Test and Stay program. All results from the Test and Stay and traditional quarantine testing were negative. We are very grateful for the opportunity to participate in this program and I'd like to thank the Hanover Fire Department and the Health Services staff for making it possible to implement this program as of the first day of school. We currently have 585 students who have consented to participate in routine covid safety checks, formerly known as Pooled Testing, and 830 have consented to participate in the Test and Stay program. We would like the community to know that the supplies we receive from the State are determined by the number of students and staff who have consented. So, if you may wish your child to participate in any one of the testing options in the future, please consent as soon as possible. The online consent form is located on the homepage of Aspen. Out of 1000 people tested through the routine covid check program, one individual was found to be positive. This case did not appear to be connected to school spread, and follow-up tests of close contacts were negative. We are in regular communication with DESE and they have assured us they are actively discussing plans for October and potential expansion of the Test and Stay program, and at this time we do not have new information to share.

Questions/Comments:

Mr. Ferron commented that our capacity to run the Test and Stay program is resource heavy. Human being resources like our Nursing Staff, Fire Department, and Paramedics. The test kits themselves are hard to get. The State provides the districts with the supplies based on a ratio of the number of people participating in Test and Stay program.

Mr. Miraglia: If you opt not to Test and Stay but then are a close contact, can you then opt into Test and Stay?

Mrs. Smith: You can still sign up to consent at any time but we would like to have the materials available so when that happens, we are ready.

Mrs. Lynch commented that it is wonderful for parents to know their children can participate in the Test and Stay and not need to quarantine.

Report of Finance Department presented by Dr. Thomas Raab:

- **FY '22 Budget Transfers**: Please find proposed budget transfers [here](#) and our the Hanover Public School website. Since the operating budget was approved in March, administration has been working hard to fully staff the School Department for a successful return to school in September. The bulk of the proposed budget transfers fall into four categories; contract settlements with the HTA and members of the administrative staff, personnel transfers between buildings, resignations, and unanticipated special education tuitions as well as new salaried positions for professional staff and support staff due to the needs of IEPs. In order to maximize efficiency and funding, we accommodate unanticipated needs through building transfers first and then add staff as necessary in Special Education after the transfers are complete.
 - **Contract Settlements**-The new three-year HTA contract (FY 2022-2024) was ratified and approved at the beginning of June. In anticipation of the new contract, we reserved \$400,000 in undesignated funding into the teacher lines of the FY 2022 budget to cover the potential COLA costs. In addition, many teachers earned “lane changes” by advancing from one column to another on the salary scale thus using the \$75,000 set aside for this purpose in the expenses. The transfer requests also distribute the \$143,463 reserved for administrative increases to the appropriate lines in the budget as a result of settled negotiations with administrators.
 - **Building Transfers**-We have had some staff transfer among buildings as result of resignations and IEP needs of students as they move from one building to another which might be a little confusing when looking at the total change in a particular budget line or building. It is important to take a system wide approach when analyzing the salary changes in a particular building. When staff move from one building to another, their salaries are also transferred. Often, the replacement staff is hired at a more entry level rate. When looking at the per building changes on the salary spreadsheet, one might notice, for example, that Center School is down \$76,717 and Cedar is up \$139,764 or the Middle School is down \$91,626 and the high school is up \$203,193; this is primarily a result of staff transfers and the salaries going with those staff members. All of the buildings are properly staffed based on the enrollment needs of the classes as well as the IEP needs of Special Education students. There have also been a few resignations over the summer from support staff and teaching positions. When possible, these were filled with a more entry level salary allowing for some savings across the board which is reflected in the building totals.
 - **Unanticipated Special Education Expenses**-Over the summer we also had some additional Special Education tuitions as well as salaries for both professional staff and support staff. These additional expenses are often a result of unanticipated move ins or IEP needs that have emerged since the budget was approved in March. We are keenly aware of the recovery needs both academic and social emotional of our most vulnerable Special Education students as we begin the school year. Special Education staffing has increased to accommodate these needs at all levels. Taken together these additional expenses in both salaries and tuitions resulted in \$400,207 needed above and beyond our FY 22 budget allocation of \$31,521,915. The chart on page 5 of 5 of the transfer request spreadsheets demonstrates how I am recommending we close the gap and is reprinted below for ease of reference. Our FY 22 Circuit Breaker amount hasn't been published online yet, but it will certainly be in excess of \$600,000 so I adjusted the budget offset from \$550,000 to \$600,000. In addition, our FY 2021 Circuit Breaker carryover is \$125,862 adding funds to close the gap. The carryover is higher than anticipated in June as we've been able to

charge COVID related expenses in FY 2021 to FEMA and ARPA, thus allowing for a higher rollover amount. We will also realize a little more in 240 Grant funding in the amount of \$2,554. Finally, and as a last resort, I am earmarking \$221,791 of the \$560,000 available in the Special Education Reserve account for this purpose leaving \$338,209 available for future unanticipated Special Education costs.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Corbo asked if we were limiting ourselves with some flexibility with the transfers?

Dr. Raab noted that he is not transferring at this time and we are just asking for approval to earmark these items.

Motion entertained by Mrs. Miller to approve the Budget Transfers as described in the memo. The motion was moved by Mr. Miraglia and seconded by Mrs. Lynch. Roll call vote: Ruth Lynch – aye, Pete Miraglia – aye, Leah Miller – aye, Libby Corbo – aye, and Ryan Hall – aye. The motion carried unanimously.

- **FY '22 Budget Update:** In the Spring, we received ESSER I and ESSER II. We now have ESSER III. We can use that on any COVID related. Details will be given at the next weekend.

Report on Teacher and Learning:

- **Special Education Program Review Preview presented by Mr. Michael Oates:** Over the next week or so, we hope to be finalizing a contract for an outside Special Education Program Review. It is like an audit but is for SPED. It is referred to as a program review or wellness check. We have an experienced educational consultant with extensive experience in public school teaching and administrative experience at the education collaborative level. We are looking to highlight our strengths and identify opportunities for growth. The BIG question is “Are our special education students being well served?” There will be data review, interviews, observations, feedback, and suggestions. The consultant will work with us to explore various topics including.
 - Effectiveness of the program
 - How we can best support families in the IEP process
 - Feedback on co-teaching and inclusion practices
 - Transitions for special education students
 - Our current administrative structure

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Lynch: Mr. Oates, you used the term “wellness check.” We are paying a consultant to do this. You then used the term program review which the State does to make sure we follow the rules and compliance. Are you preparing for this compliance review by doing a wellness check first?

Mr. Oates: The consultant came up with the terminology of the wellness check. This is not the one that the State does.

The next School Committee meeting is scheduled for September 29, 2021, at 7:00 PM at Hanover High School. Expected agenda items will be: FY '22 Budget Updates, COVID Health Update, Draft 1.0 of Superintendent's Goals for 2021-2022, MASS Superintendent Academic Awards, Update on Literacy Initiatives

Mrs. Lynch wanted to recognize and thank School Committee Member Libby Corbo for all the incredible work she has done in our community with the new Hanover Food Pantry at the Sylvester School.

Mrs. Corbo was thankful for the unexpected recognition. The Food Pantry board would like to thank the school department, Mr. Ferron, and Lynn Petrowski for their support over the past year. Today was the first day and it was successful.

Mrs. Miller was thankful to the Middle and Center school for great curriculum nights.

Motion by Miraglia to adjourn the open session at 8:30 PM. The motion was seconded by Lynch. Roll call vote: Ryan Hall – aye, Libby Corbo – aye, Ruth Lynch – aye, Pete Miraglia – aye, and Leah Miller – aye. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Tahnee Warner

Tahnee Warner
Executive Assistant/ Recording Secretary