

Hanover School Committee Meeting Minutes
November 17, 2021
Hybrid Meeting
Hanover High School-Media Center
7:00 PM

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

Also Present: Matthew Ferron, Debbie St. Ives, Michael Oates, Patricia Smith, Dan Birolini, Jane DeGrenier, Garry Pelletier, Matthew Mattos, Matthew Plummer, Mike Perrone

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM by Mrs. Miller.

Mrs. Miller reiterated that the Committee looked at the public participation policy and it does state the public comment will be held at the start of the meeting. The timeframe is at the purview of the Chair and the Committee as to the length of the public comment. The policy states *public comment will be allowed three minutes each and it will be timed*. Mrs. Miller also wanted to remind the public and community that all comments need to be civil at all times. Individuals or groups of people will not be allowed to call out. The policy can be reviewed by the Committee and it may be something the Committee reviews in the future; however, the current policy stands as written and will continue to be implemented as such.

Public Comment: None

Approval of Minutes:

November 3, 2021: Motion entertained by Mrs. Miller to approve the November 3, 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:

- **HTA MOA Ratification:** The MOA has already been ratified by the Association and has been reviewed by the Committee and Council. Mr. Ferron is looking to ratify the MOA and upon ratification, it will be posted on our website.

Motion entertained by Mrs. Miller to approve the *Memorandum of Agreement between the Hanover School Committee and the Hanover Teacher's Association dated October 21, 2021* as written. The motion was moved by Mr. Miraglia and seconded by Mrs. Lynch. The motion carried unanimously.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Corbo wanted to raise two issues that were reviewed with Council regarding changes to the masking provision based on some concerns that Mrs. Corbo had brought forward. Based on the revisions, they satisfy her concern. She also noted that the provisions at the end of the Agreement, which states "*not establishing any precedent beyond the school year*", satisfies her concerns regarding the restrictions for live streaming.

Mr. Miraglia noted that at the end it states; "The terms should not continue beyond the flows of the school year." He asked if it is correct to understand that the scope of this is just for this academic year. Mr. Ferron concurred that is correct.

Report of Finance Department presented by Mr. Matthew Ferron: FY '23 Capital Budget Update: There has been very little change since the last School Committee meeting. A copy of the [Proposed FY 23 School Facility Improvements](#) presentation by Victor Diniak at the Ad Comm meeting is posted on the School Committee page under documents. Mr. Ferron encourages the Committee to take a look at the presentation and noted that they are still looking at various requests for FY '23 on the Capital Plan as we continue to work with the Town Manager on options for the following big projects:

- Middle and Cedar School Parking Lots-This will be addressed at a Town Meeting on whether it is a free cash article or a borrowing item. The Town Manager and his team are working on it.
- Cedar Security and Improving the Vestibule-There will be additional funding to adjust for increased construction costs as well as to improve the scope of the project.
- Multi-purpose Turf Field-This is a 1.6 million project to do renovations to the carpet, improve the track, make some modifications to the size of the carpet, other improvements around the field, and in other areas. This may be a borrowing or free cash article. The Town Manager and his team are working on that as well.

Some of these will be paid for out of possibly free cash, some out of ARPA Recovery Funds, and some from CARES Funds. Mr. Perrone and Mr. Ferron will be working daily with the Town Manager in a few weeks through the budget season. In a couple of weeks, the operating budget will be started. The Leadership Team and Principals have seen the Capital Plan. Discussions about the budget exclusively around personnel is where we will see upcoming budget issues particularly in the area of Special Education and Literacy. Mr. Oates will touch upon this in more detail in the update on Special Education Program review.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Corbo asked what was going on with the Cedar School roof and recalled applying for MSVA Private Funding to replace the roof. Mr. Ferron responded that we did apply for the Emergency Project Funding to replace the entire Cedar roof and received it. The project got to the point of approval; but the Town portion reached their capacity on the Town's budget. We would need seven figures to replace the roof. There is money sitting in articles for the Cedar roof and the vestibule for repairs. The original estimate received for replacing the roof was significantly different than what it was going to cost. The MSVA Emergency Funding would have to be reapplied for.

Mrs. Hall noticed that the estimation on the turf field renovation has changed from \$1 to \$3 million and now is estimated at \$1.6 million. Mrs. Hall wanted to know if this is because of the scope that was decided on and are we confident on this new number? Mr. Ferron responded that we are confident in that number and that our needs are satisfied with the stated fixes. Mr. Ferron referred Mrs. Hall to Mr. Diniak's presentation as it may answer some of her questions. Mrs. Hall verified the life expectancy for a turf field is about ten years. Mr. Ferron concurred that is the life expectancy for a turf field and the High School turf field is twelve-years old.

Mr. Ferron added that the only other questioned item is the second turf field. In FY '24, it is slated for \$300,000 for a design, and FY '25 is slated for \$4.5 million but this is hypothetical. The vision is a baseball and softball outfield area re-turfed and the capacity for a soccer field in the outfield. The community will have a lot more useable space for youth sports.

Report on Teaching and Learning:

- **Update on Special Education Program Review presented by Mr. Oates:** The program reviewer *Dorsey* is in the midst of our document and data review. The planning and recruiting stage have begun. A big part of a program is the interviews which are being prepared. Nineteen groups or individuals will be interviewed as part of the review and each session is about an hour. The interview sessions will take place on December 3, 6, 7, and 9, 2021. The groups are SEPAC Leadership, at-large parent group (parents whose children received student services), various teacher's groups (by level and assignment), building administrators, district-level administrators, special education tutors, and related service providers. There will be nineteen total sessions over the four days. The details are being worked out.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Lynch wanted clarification regarding the Program Evaluation within the Superintendent's Goals. When she reviewed the goals, the section with the Program Evaluation states "an independent evaluator" is doing this work; but, isn't this required and done by the State? Mr. Oates clarified that it is two separate evaluations. Mrs. Lynch followed up by asking when the State will conduct its review. Mr. Oates noted that he will look into that but believes it will be in the next year or two depending on the delays from COVID.

Mrs. Hall inquired about the responses from the survey that was sent out and if the information received was helpful. Mr. Oates noted that the responses to the survey were not great. A total of 40 responses were received, but this number is not accurate due to parents having multiple children in the programs. An additional message about the survey needs to be sent out. SEPAC has been very supportive in trying to help get the message and survey out.

Mrs. Miller asked if the survey was drafted by an independent consultant or by Mr. Oates's team. Mr. Oates responded that the survey is not new but slightly different than the survey that is given at the end of an IEP meeting. In working with Mrs. Hall and Mr. Miraglia, it was decided to get the information earlier in the year.

Mrs. Lynch requested Mr. Oates discuss the program that ran last month with a speaker for Special Ed parents. Mr. Oates noted the "Meet Your Administrators" was run by SEPAC. There were about twenty to twenty-five parents that attended. The only difficult part is some parents wanted to ask their individual questions, but this evening's purpose was to provide an overview and to answer some of the general questions.

Mr. Miraglia inquired about the Program Review and wanted to know what other components there are besides the interviews. Mr. Oates responded that a lot of it is historical data. The reviewer will look back at several years at referrals, testing eligibility, students in separate programs, particular groups with their performance on standardized tests, in particular, MCAS, and performance around our out-of-district placements outside of schools that we support. The reviewer is asking clarifying questions regarding staffing, looking how we staff our programs district-wide, what the percentage is of students versus staff that is assigned to students, questions regarding para's and tutors, and clarifying questions that are unique to other districts that have been reviewed in the past.

- **Early College Project Update presented by Mr. Matt Ferron:** Hanover Public Schools continues to work as part of the South Shore Consortium along with approximately twelve other districts. "*The Educational Alliance*" enables our high school students to enroll in college courses. A partnership with Quincy College already exists as some of our teachers serve as adjunct professors. At this time, if a student is taking a particular class, it may be recognized as a dual enrollment class for credits at both Hanover High School and Quincy College. The cost of each course is \$300 in order to receive college credits. The current program was reviewed in a recent meeting with the Quincy College President, the marketing department, their leadership, our teachers, and the high school administrators. There are not many students taking advantage of the credit component of the course. In further discussion, it was decided that more informed information needs to be shared on which colleges are accepting these credits. Quincy College wants to work with us to elevate the perception of its program.
- Currently the focus is on the program with the Consortium on the South Shore, particularly with UMASS Dartmouth. A couple of students are taking courses remotely and a few students plan to take courses in the Spring. There are three or four offerings each semester and the number of courses offered are expected to increase. The Consortium had a meeting with the President of UMASS and Presidents of several New England Colleges to try and come up with an articulation agreement or an understanding that these credits would be transferable.
- The high school administration, several department heads, and twenty students met with the Education Alliance and representatives from Boston Architectural College and William James College. The entire UMASS College system and several local private colleges are interested. There are logistical issues to be

worked out. DESE just came out with an early college competitive grant for \$150,000. We did apply for it. All the districts as a Consortium will apply for the grant separately and together. If that level of funding is received, it gives some flexibility on how the courses can be funded or subsidized. The few students taking courses at UMASS Dartmouth now are taking the course for free as part of our pilot program beyond that, the cost is \$111 per credit. If a student goes to a public college in Massachusetts, these credits are legitimate. The State is putting money towards the program with other Colleges.

- Also, in conversations with American Fire Safety, they are starting up some programming in East Bridgewater and other surrounding districts for classes to be certified as an EMT, CAN, and other medical field professions.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Lynch commented that the number of students involved was referenced but from what she understands that is not a concern as the goal is to provide programs for students who may be interested in classes not currently offered at Hanover High School. Mr. Ferron agreed that it is worth the effort to build the infrastructure so that all students have options.

Mr. Miraglia added the benefits of this program are experience, credits for the course, and that it can be added to the student's college application. He wanted to know how this works with the AP program already in place. Mr. Ferron does not see the program as competition but another option. Every student and family are different.

Mrs. Corbo reiterated that the value is not necessarily just in the credits, but the experience of taking the course, allowing the student to take a course that might not be offered, also the confidence the student builds going into their freshman year as they recognize they can handle college courses, as well as the exposure to the college experience before they go.

Other Comments:

Mrs. Lynch would like to see class sizes and the AP scores from last May and June. Mr. Ferron stated that these will be on an upcoming agenda along with other autumn and winter business.

Mrs. Corbo shared some community updates. Flo Grady passed away. She was a 15-year member with Ad Comm and was a friend of the Hanover Public Schools. Services will be announced later this week. Chief Blanchard is retiring and his party is tomorrow at the library. He is a great friend to the Hanover Schools and was instrumental in the Center School Building Project. Lastly, Mrs. Corbo wanted to thank and recognize Mr. Birolini and Mrs. DeGrenier for their food collections for the Hanover Food Pantry. It is estimated that over \$2000 worth of food was given out this week. She really appreciates the collaboration and partnership with the Hanover Public Schools.

Mr. Ferron reminded the Committee that The National Honor Society induction is on Monday night. Committee members should reach out to Matt if they are able to attend.

The next School Committee meeting is scheduled for December 8, 2021, at 7:00 PM at Hanover High School. Expected agenda items will be: Literacy Program Update; Budget planning FY '23; others TBD.

Motion entertained by Mrs. Miller to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 PM. The motion was moved by Mr. Miraglia and seconded by Mrs. Lynch. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Tahnee Warner

Tahnee Warner
Executive Assistant/ Recording Secretary