

Hanover School Committee Meeting Minutes
May 11, 2016
Hanover High School

Present: John Geary, Ruth Lynch, Leah Miller, Kimberly Booker and Libby Corbo

Also Present: Matthew Ferron, Thomas Raab, Debbie St. Ives, Joan Woodward, Matthew Paquette, Sheila Walsh, Matt Plummer, Hugh Galligan

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairperson Geary

Introduction of New Committee Member

- Mr. Geary welcomed Leah Miller as the newest member of the Committee.
- Ms. Miller has lived in Hanover for 6 years, has three children, and was a high school math teacher for 7 years.
- Ms. Miller commented that she is excited to get back into the education world after taking time off to be with her family.

Approval of Minutes:

- Motion by Lynch to approve the April 27, 2016 general meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Booker. Abstention by Miller. The motion carried with a majority vote.

Report of Superintendent - presented by Superintendent Ferron

Updates and Events:

- Senior prom is this Friday night and many other senior week activities next week.
- HPS is very proud of Callie Hoadley, junior at HHS, who was recognized by Channel 7 as a "Class Act". Callie has done great work this year supporting the Special Olympics and other community events.
- PARCC and AP testing are ongoing. Overall, operational issues have been going fairly well. PARCC testing is all being done online, which has been successful.
- Reorganization of the School Committee will be done at the next meeting. Mr. Ferron will send out current Committee assignments for Committee review and a vote for each assignment will be taken at the next meeting.

Center/Sylvester Building Project Update – presented by Ms. Corbo

- Ms. Corbo presented the updated schematic design for the proposed renovations for the Center School. The schematic design is posted online for the public.
- The Building Committee met last week with Hanover Police and Fire Departments to discuss safety concerns at the renovation site. A loop road has been included in the design per the request of Public Safety Officials for any emergencies and also for bussing.
- The Committee is looking into adding a road for parent traffic to help ease congestion during drop off and pick up as well as expanded parking for special events.
- This design offers a courtyard with an outdoor classroom that will facilitate project based learning and small group learning.
- DESE will be reviewing designs for special education room placement.
- Mr. Geary asked if the police have vetted this design with the cafeteria (with many windows) being in front in the case of an active shooter situation. Ms. Corbo responded Yes, Chief Sweeney has been involved in conversations.
- It looks like we may opt to not have a stage to save on square footage and money.

- The Building Committee is looking at the cost of the access loop road and it may not be put in if the cost is too high and if Public Safety Officials do not object.
- Considering different roof, HVAC, flooring and generator options for cost savings.
- Ms. Lynch commented that she thought rooms couldn't be designated special education rooms in a building and that they had to be dispersed. Response by Ms. Corbo was they are dispersed throughout building and are used for students who need pull out services. Ms. Booker commented there would be space for a calming room. Ms. Woodward commented that there would be a related therapy room, life skills space and that rooms would be equal in space and size and dispersed among regular education classrooms.
- Existing classrooms will be upgraded for equity to the new space.

Finance Department – presented by Dr. Raab

FY'16 Monthly Budget Update

- Carefully evaluating expenses and salaries and coming up with hard numbers for FY'16.
- All but \$31,000 has been encumbered of the FY'16 budget and we are not anticipating having much money left at the end of the year. We will recommend if there is money we prepay special education tuitions.
- Negative \$12,000 is due to a spike in homeless transportation. Unused money in legal can be transferred if needed to cover.
- Negative \$79,000 in district-wide special education due to previously encumbering \$100,000 of Circuit Breaker, which if we don't go over we will be fine.

Q3 Revolving Account Update

- These numbers are as of March 31, 2016.
- The middle school extended day account is negative but their enrichment is strong. There was a recent resignation of the EDP Coordinator that will not be filled through the end of the year to close the gap.
- The School Store has a small negative balance with a large amount of inventory to be sold at Hanover Day.
- The high school drama account was negative due to expenses for their recent play. Proceeds from *Anything Goes* will easily close the gap.
- Mr. Geary requested that the Q4 report show not just the snapshot of balances but also the expectation for rollover on the top 10% of accounts. Dr. Raab responded that he would include that. As an example, the FACE program ended last year at \$140,000 and we then invested \$70,000 into the program, and we are close to that again this year.
- Ms. Corbo commented that the Cedar full day kindergarten number seemed high. Dr. Raab responded that the salaries had not been drawn enough from this line but instead from the operating budget which will be adjusted with journal entries.

Report on Teaching and Learning

HHS Later Start Time - presented by Mr. Paquette, Mr. Galligan, Dr. Walsh, and Mr. Plummer

- HS Administration team presented the concept of a later start time at the high school level.
- Research states that when adolescents get more sleep it is highly beneficial on many levels.
- Proposal:
 - HHS currently begins at 7:25AM and dismisses at 2:16PM and the proposal is to begin at 7:55AM and dismiss at 2:40PM which is 6 minutes shorter than present day
 - The team looked at non-instructional time to cut back the dismissal time to alleviate concerns around transportation, athletics, teacher schedules, clubs, jobs, etc.
 - A 2:40PM dismissal would help alleviate dismissal concerns at Cedar
 - Benefits are what is in the best interest of students; social, academic, general health, increased learning

- Concerns:
 - Transportation – For FY'17 there are 17 buses for the district; 14 at HMS, 3 at HHS. No impact on morning transportation. Afternoons would require 20 buses to manage all dismissals. Mr. Ingle has extra buses for \$12K per bus for 3 extra buses. Increased ridership to 150 at the HS will increase revenue. There are also opportunities for revenue; tuition expenses may decrease and also fuel de-escalation cost may give us increased revenue. We are confident we could incorporate increased cost into FY'17 budget.
 - Impact on Athletics – if it's in the academic best interest of students, accommodations can be found for sports. Sports that would be affected and contracts for ice time for hockey are being discussed.
 - Extra Curricular Activities: National Honor Society, Student Council, Debate Team etc., may benefit from having time in the mornings to meet. Class Officers at all levels meet with 2 advisors on a regular basis and morning meetings would be a great benefit.
- Research:
 - We have looked at local schools that have made this change already and the benefits and effects it has had on their students' health and academic performance.
 - Average length of the school day for these schools is 6 hours 29 minutes and with our proposal ours would be 6 hours 45 minutes.
 - Many schools that have made the change are in the 8AM range and they took incremental steps.
 - Research shows an even later start time could be more beneficial but this would be our first step.
 - To measure success, we will look at measurable data and compare it to past years where we had an earlier start time: improvement in attendance and grades and a decrease in discipline
- Teacher Footprint:
 - 7hours 20 minutes is teachers contractual day
 - Teacher office hours are currently after school, so their day would end at 3:10PM
 - If teacher office hours moved to the morning, their day would be 7:25AM – 2:45PM
 - Teachers could offer flexible office hours where teachers would post their office hours and some days they would be here before school and late on others
- Professional Development Days:
 - Proposal to have professional development from 7:25-9:25AM with office hours at 9:25AM. The school day would begin at 10AM with dismissal at 2:40PM
 - This would give us additional data on even later start time and how it affects students well-being, academics and discipline
 - This may ease parents concerns of having a teenager home at noon on our professional development days now
- Mr. Geary commented that the office hour concept is great to teach students but seems like it could be difficult for tracking. How will it be managed or monitored? Mr. Paquette responded that it would allow for more accountability and that they would have a posted schedule of when a teacher will be in the building. It would also allow for better collaboration between general and special education teachers. Mr. Geary expressed concern that staff will spend a lot of time managing the process. Mr. Paquette responded that if that becomes the case they would reevaluate and change the schedule.
- Mr. Geary asked what the expectation is to determine if this is successful? Would we be able to see an increase in metrics and efficiencies of managing this in a year? Mr. Paquette responded we would most likely have the data in a year and could make decisions to change

if necessary. Hanover is in a unique situation where we will have redesigned educational structure in 2018, which could be an opportunity to push this more if it is successful. We are prepared to have creative and innovative discussions.

- Ms. Corbo commented that traffic is primary concern of parents and that she would like to hear from Chief of Police and for the police to observe traffic and evaluate if the 20 minutes would be enough time between school dismissals. Mr. Paquette agreed to have the police monitor traffic.
- Ms. Corbo questioned if end of day meetings are moved to before school, does this defeat the purpose of later start time? Mr. Paquette responded that clubs are meeting a couple of times a month. If they were meeting every day, it would defeat the purpose.
- Ms. Corbo questioned how many buses there would be on the professional development days when students would come in at 10AM? Mr. Paquette and Dr. Raab responded that there would be 3 in AM and PM, which would shorten ride times.
- Ms. Corbo expressed a concern where middle school students will arrive home before an older sibling. Mr. Paquette commented that a School Council member brought this up as a concern as well and we will discuss again before the end of the year. Ms. Corbo commented that the research is very compelling and commended the group for thinking outside the box.
- The school would be open at 6:30AM if parents need to drop off early.
- Ms. Miller commented that when she taught, the school had X blocks on Tuesdays and Thursdays, which offered longer office hours on 2 days not 20 minutes every day.
- Ms. Lynch suggested really stressing the research on how the teenage brain works and how this will be beneficial to help parents understand. She also commented that she is glad this will be examined again in 2018 and that traffic shouldn't be an issue with the amount of students who stay late for extra curricular and athletic activities.
- Ms. Booker commented that people are always going to be resistant and stressed the need to educate parents on why this is so important. Is the 2:40PM dismissal similar to preschool dismissal? Mr. Paquette will look into that.
- Mr. Ferron commented that this is being talked about at many levels and will be discussed at legislative level sooner than later. The team is being proactive and it is important to have this conversation to evaluate opportunities, risks, and challenges so we are not caught unprepared.
- Ms. Corbo commented that parents are impacted and has there been any thought to survey parents? She also suggested reaching out to PAC to see if they think this would have implications on learners with special needs.

Public Comment:

- Madison Carroll, sophomore at HHS, commented that this is a great concept but start time isn't the problem, it's the workload students have. Students are sleep deprived because they stay up to do homework.
- Max Shelley, junior at HHS, commented that he loves the idea of waking up later but with office hours, many teachers say they cannot stay and will hold them in the morning. If students have trouble learning something we stay after, but if I have to come in the morning I may forget my questions and not be able to do my homework because I don't understand it. Also, there is a lot of talk about parents not understanding but students don't understand the facts and feel like they have no say. Mr. Geary responded that students always have a voice and School Committee is here to make sure you are heard.
- Jill Drummy, senior at HHS, thanked the administration for everything they do for students and that her time at HHS taught her so much. She came tonight because of the buzz on social media and in class and didn't think about many of the things brought up tonight. She still thinks there is a lot to consider for the students and to think about everyone rushing and things piling up if we are out later.

- John Hopkins, President of HTA, commented that he is 100% behind this proposal and would like to see 8:30 or 9AM but logistically it's very difficult. Its true many teachers are here early and late, we do give our all to the students. As for the bargaining aspect, the HTA has the right to bargain the impact on working conditions of teachers.
- Andrew Mahoney, HTA President elect, commented that he teaches a first period class and he does see consistent absences/tardies, so he sees the benefit of moving to a later start time. A survey went out to teachers and administration has been transparent. Results were 50/50 and questions raised were similar to tonight. When data shows this is beneficial, teachers would be in support of this. The union is ready to move forward with discussions on the teacher workday.
- Jae Picard commented that if many people want to be involved and offer feedback that the Committee please consider getting everyone involved in a more formal way.
- Cathy Harder-Bernier, parent, commented that as a former member of HS School Council that this was discussed 4-5 years ago. The research was clear and it was evident that it was in the best interest of students. She encourages the Committee to listen to pushback from parents, from teachers, to the bargaining issues, etc., as they ever really attacked that. She is 100% behind this and hopes for the move the start time, nothing else matters but students.
- Mr. Geary asked when a decision needs to be made for this to be in place next September? This will need to be discussed over the next few meetings and a timeline needs to be set so the Committee can do their due diligence before making a decision. Mr. Geary requested that the high school administrative team provide more data; gather student, parent, teacher and PAC feedback and present it to the Committee.
- Mr. Ferron commented that this has to be voted by June 8th for logistics to be ironed out. The recommendation is for another report at the next meeting. We will gather feedback and address students and bring them in for a conversation. We will work with HTA on the teacher impact. Whatever is in the best interest of kids is first and foremost.

Action Items:

Approval of 2016-2017 Student Handbooks

- Motion by Lynch to approve the High School Handbook. Booker seconded the motion.
- Ms. Lynch commented that the documents are sequential, logical, and well written. She commended the high school for its Learning Matrix and that the Code of Conduct expresses responsibility and expectations, not just consequences.
- Abstention by Miller. The motioned carried with a majority vote.
- Motion by Lynch to approve Middle School Handbook. Booker seconded the motion.
- Ms. Corbo commented on the math map as being very helpful because parents are very unsure on how it works.
- Abstention by Miller. The motioned carried with a majority vote.
- Motion by Lynch to approve Elementary Handbook. Booker seconded the motion.
- Ms. Booker thanked Debbie for meeting with principals and responding to her concerns.
- Ms. Corbo commented that there needs to be a discussion around elementary homework. Committee and handbook homework policies fall in line with recommendations from national associations but what children are receiving is longer. We need to hold to our policies. Mr. Geary commented that we should monitor equality between elementary schools, if 10-15 minutes in one school it should be the same in the other. Ms. Corbo commented that the District needs to look at long range projects on top of reading logs, math sheets, etc. Mr. Ferron commented that the administrative team is always looking at how to improve. Mr. Ferron assured the Committee his team is open and excited about this conversation and is willing to work on this together.
- Abstention by Miller. The motioned carried with a majority vote.

- Ms. Lynch commented that the District should get feedback particularly at elementary level. Ms. St. Ives responded that it's time to look at this and that they would get feedback from teachers, parents and students.

Extension of Superintendent's Contract Through FY '19

- The Committee determined that with the Center/Sylvester building project and other initiatives that are in motion, it is in the best interest of the Committee and District to extend Mr. Ferron's contract through FY'19.

Motion by Lynch to approve the extension of the Superintendent's Contract through FY'19, with discussion regarding salary for year three to take place in April 2017. The motion was seconded by Booker. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments: None presented

Next meeting is scheduled for May 25, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. at the High School.

Motion by Lynch to adjourn at 9:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Booker. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted

Rachael O'Callaghan

Documents Used:

Center/Sylvester Schematic Design

FY'16 Monthly Budget Update

Q3 Revolving Account Update

HHS Later Start Time Presentation

2016-2017 Elementary, Middle School and High School Student Handbooks