

School Committee Minutes
Virtual Meeting
September 14, 2020

Members attending: Sharlene Cronin, SusanMary Redinger, Suzanne Allen, Shannon Molloy, Abby Besse, Maureen Babcock and Linda Dwight

Others in attendance: Josh Myler, Brooke Caroom, Taylor Caroom, Felicia Jamba, and Will Walling-Sotolongo and Aziz Aghayev.

SusanMary Redinger called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

SusanMary Redinger read a statement indicating that the meeting was being held remotely and the meeting was being held via video conferencing. Members in attendance were identified through a roll call process.

Taylor Caroom read the Core Value Statement: Student Achievement.

Public Comment:

None

Student Report

Felicia Jamba reported that the start of school has been going smoothly and much better than she thought.

Brooke Caroom reported that students in the hybrid model seem to be organized and effective in keeping the classrooms clean with the process in place to clean desks and use hand sanitizer.

Will Walling-Sotolongo reported that school sports are starting. Crew has started and most other sports that will be played in the fall will be up and running by September 22nd.

Retreat Update/Moderator Intro

SusanMary Redinger introduced Cheryl Lower who will moderate the School Committee retreat in September. Ms. Lower explained how the retreat would be structured. Prior to the retreat Ms. Lower will interview School Committee members by phone and will meet with SusanMary Redinger and Dr. Dwight to develop an agenda that will be distributed to all members prior to the meeting. She looks forward to working with the School Committee.

Superintendent Update

See Attached.

Dr. Dwight shared the quote from R.W Sullivan Engineering in the amount of \$15,000 to assess the HVAC equipment at the Bromfield School. The Committee is most interested that the study will give information on the exchange rate and the air quality.

Suzanne Allen made the motion and SusanMary Redinger seconded to authorize Dr. Dwight to spend up to \$15,000, plus the \$600 in reimbursables on the HVAC proposal with the

understanding that Dr. Dwight will review the scope with the facilities manager and reduce anything that is deemed to be not needed.

VOTE: Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye)

Personnel Update

Dr. Dwight shared the updated 2020/2021 personnel spreadsheet. Dr. Dwight will update the spreadsheet for the next meeting to include any additional staff and designate the positions that can be charged to the COVID and ESSER grants.

Technology Purchase

Dr. Dwight submitted a request to the Committee asking permission to lease 246 iPads. The cost of this new expenditure would be \$117,695.70 including Apple Care insurance and cases. The lease would be paid over 3 years at an annual amount of \$40,007.40. The request is being made to accommodate an increasing demand for technology and technology support. To date there are 40 iPads signed out to families of remote students and 24 more iPads sent home with hybrid student to access their daily after and Wednesday remote classes. When families use non-school issued devices, they tend to need more technology support. This is difficult for our tech support staff to manage as well as the support that they are providing to the teachers and staff. Members of the Committee supported sending out a survey to allow families to opt out and then order only enough iPads to support the current needs of families. As part of the information in the survey parents should be informed of any Apple specific needs and the minimum specifications/requirement of devices.

Suzanne Allen made the motion and Shannon Molloy seconded to move to direct Dr. Dwight to survey the HES community K-4 so we can use a targeted approach and understand the exact need of technology and allow people to opt out of a technology purchase and use that data to go ahead and purchase these additional iPads on the three-year lease.

VOTE: Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye)

The Committee would like to know the actual number of iPads being purchased based on the survey results and determined that the lease of the additional iPads would be funded through the Devens account.

End of Year Financial Final Report

Aziz Aghayev gave a final report of the FY20 year-end budget close-out. Aziz Aghayev will provide the updated numbers to the Finance Committee.

Policy Update

The Policy Subcommittee will review the attorney's changes for Policy ACAB and bring back to the next meeting for approval.

Anti-Racism Initiative Update

Students were working on an addendum to the open letter. A video was shared with staff at an anti-racism workshop. The next day, the teachers met with the students who wrote the addendum to the Anti-Racism letter. It was determined that there should be more books written by black writers or covering topics in historical perspectives. There is not a lot of literature where the main character is of another ethnic group and were part of the main stream. The focus is more on overcoming hardship instead of sharing people who contributed to society that were from a different culture. Teachers are interested in taking the next steps in a series of conversations and student meetings. The entire topic will be presented to the School Committee at a future meeting.

Testing Initiative Update

Shannon Molloy provided an update on what has been happening around the COVID testing initiative. There are parents interested in COVID tests for additional support. A group has been formed and they have identified a 501c company that would be able to cover some base line testing. An initial meeting is scheduled for this week. First focus is on faculty and staff. The test is an FDA approved saliva-based test that would be sent out to a lab for results. The options moving forward are options to repeat testing, expanding the cohort and next generation tests with a cost. The group is looking for how supportive the School Committee would be on this initiative. The Committee agreed that they would like for it to be endorsed by the Board of Health and the school nurses as well as in consultation with the legal department. Shannon Molloy will work with Dr. Dwight. This could be a wonderful opportunity for our teachers and staff.

Topics and Timing for SAC meeting

The Committee discussed with the Student Advisory Council members the best day and time to meet. It was agreed that meetings would be held the first Wednesday of every other month at 1:30 p.m. The first meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 7th. The topic of the first meeting will be to get feedback from remote and hybrid learning on how everything is going.

Grant Approval

The PTO presented a check for \$1,000 to defray the cost of the sound system for the graduation ceremony

The Harvard Schools Trust presented a gift in the amount of \$85.95 for document camera stands.

Without objection SusanMary Redinger accepted the gifts as presented with a letter of gratitude to both organizations.

VOTE: Allen (Aye), Besse (Aye), Cronin (Aye), Molloy (Aye), Redinger (Aye)

Future Meeting Dates

September 28

Retreat September 26th

Agenda Items

Superintendent Evaluation
Policy
Bus numbers and enrollments
Title IX

Minutes

With no objection SusanMary Redinger approved the minutes of the August 24th and August 31st meeting as amended.

Liaison Subcommittee Updates

Suzanne Allen reported that the Policy Subcommittee will be discussing the changes to the Harassment policy at the next meeting. There are also a few small changes needing to be made to the COVID policies. Please let the Policy Subcommittee know if there is any information you would like changed or clarified.

SusanMary Redinger reported that the HES building project is moving along nicely. There is lots of work being done on schedule i.e. stone work, landscaping, dry walling and painting on the inside. The move in date is scheduled for mid-May and still on budget.

SusanMary Redinger reported that Capital met and they are supportive of the middle school ramp project proposal. They are hoping to accomplish the ramp project without incurring debt. They would use capital and stabilization funds and whatever the school can contribute. The School Committee will come up with a recommendation as to what they could contribute towards the ramp project and vote at the next meeting.

Public Commentary

None

SC Commentary

None

Adjourn

With no objection SusanMary Redinger adjourned the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Zadroga

