

**Hopedale School Committee
Minutes of the Meeting of
Tuesday, October 6, 2020**

Members Present: Alysia Butler, Chair
Lori Hampsch, Vice Chair
Lisa Alberto
Jennifer McKeon
Kristi Brytowski

Also Present: Karen M. Crebase, Superintendent
Lynne Davis, School Accountant
Adam Banayan, School Committee Student Representative
Katelynn Brunt and Madison Sullivan, Student Council Representatives
Derek Atherton, Jr-Sr High School Principal
Karen Cosgrove, Pupil Personnel Services Director
Brian Miller, Memorial School Principal
Kristen Poisson, Bright Beginnings Center Principal
Nick Toupin, Technology Director
Debra Brackett, Transportation Coordinator

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order suspending certain provisions of the open meeting law, GL chapter 30A, section 18, and the Governor's March 15 and August 7, 2020 Orders imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, the meeting of the Hopedale School Committee was conducted via remote participation. Members of the Committee and the Superintendent participated in-person in the Media Center at the Jr-Sr High School. The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm under these provisions with a quorum present. She invited members of the public to monitor the meeting by using the information provided on the Town's website and announced that the meeting was being recorded and streaming live. A video of the meeting will be available on the Town website.

1. Minutes of September 2, 8, and 14, 2020 - Upon a motion by Mrs. Alberto which was seconded by Mrs. Hampsch, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes of September 2, 8, and 14, 2020.

2. Student Representatives' Report – Jr.-Sr. High School: Katelynn Brunt and Madison Sullivan reported on the upcoming virtual informational STUCO meeting and seventh grade elections. They also reported that they are investigating ideas for safe community service projects.

3. Superintendent's Comments – The Superintendent reported on the New Teacher Reception which was held prior to this meeting, the successful return of students to the district's three buildings, and the full-day extended day program being held at the Union Church. The fall sports season has begun with a modified schedule, limited spectators, and safety protocols in place. In addition, the work of the Reopening Advisory Board will change its focus from planning for reopening to reviewing the progress made to date.

4. Response to Superintendent's Comments – Mrs. Brytowski shared her observations of the successful extended day program. The Chair noted her appreciation of the efforts throughout the district for the successful start of the school year.

5. Financial Items/Budget -

- **Monthly Report of Accounts Payable Warrants:** The Committee reviewed the recent warrant report presented by Mrs. Davis. Upon a motion by Mrs. Alberto which was seconded by Mrs. McKeon, the members unanimously voted to ratify the payment of two accounts payable warrants dated September 3 and 17, 2020 in the amount of \$252,599.55.

- **Monthly Reports of Payroll Warrants:** Upon a motion by Mrs. Alberto which was seconded by Mrs. McKeon, the members unanimously voted to ratify the payment of four payroll warrants dated September 3, 10 (two) and 24, 2020 in the amount of \$896,088.59.
- **Monthly Budget Reports:** Mrs. Davis presented the monthly budget report for September 2020 and noted that it continues to reflect the budget total originally voted at Town Meeting in July. It will be adjusted when a final revised budget is approved later this month.
- **Warrants for Signature:** There were no warrants distributed for signature.

6. Committee Reports-

- **Committee on Policy:** The Superintendent presented a Policy Review Schedule for the 2020-2021 school year listing Policy Committee meetings and School Committee meeting dates when policies will be presented to the members. A first draft of **Policy IJNDD - Policy on Social Media** was reviewed. The revisions clarify that the policy's provisions are in addition to the district's AUP requirements and address employees who post about the district. The Superintendent also presented a final draft of Policy **EBCFA-Face Coverings** which was unanimously approved for adoption upon a motion by Mrs. Hampsch which was seconded by Mrs. Alberto.
- **Committee on Budget:** Mrs. Hampsch reviewed recent meetings of the Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen, and reported that the override ballot failed to pass on September 15, 2020. The district is waiting for direction from the Town with regard to budget adjustments but is anticipating a reduction to approximately \$12,300,000.
- **Committee on Public Relations:** This item was passed over.

7. Agenda Items:

- **Transportation Update:** Transportation Coordinator Deb Brackett reported that the district is transporting 73 high school students and 140 elementary students, which is approximately 50% fewer students than previous years. Sanitizing and safety protocols are in place and buses are limited to 24 students. Transportation fees will be revisited later this year.
- **Food Services Update:** Food Services Director Cheryl Bober submitted a written report outlining her department's response to the closing of the buildings last spring and efforts to insure the availability of meals for students and families. Since the start of this school year, meals are being provided by delivery or pick-up each week to 67 families. All remote and hybrid students will be provided free lunch through December.
- **Technology Update:** Technology Director Nick Toupin provided an update on his department's completed summer projects which include the installation of access control systems, an upgraded internet line at the Jr-Sr High School, the repurposing of shared technology spaces, replacing the core server at BBC, moving internal network storage to Google Drive, implementing systems to provide additional support to students, families and staff, and the deployment of Google Enterprise and Google Meet for remote and synchronous learning. Mr. Toupin also reviewed the efforts currently underway to complete the district-wide 1:1 initiative for staff and students and to support remote and synchronous learning with new software systems and tools.
- **Opening of School with Students:**
 - Bright Beginnings Center:** Mrs. Poisson reported that the current enrollment is 83 students. She discussed the outdoor orientation with students and parents, reduced class sizes, optional activities for non-session days, and plans to schedule additional days for the youngest students who are currently attending only one day per week.
 - Memorial Elementary School:** Mr. Miller reported that there are 103 students attending school remotely and 430 students enrolled in the hybrid model. He discussed class sizes, the in-person kindergarten orientation, students successfully following safety protocols, the creativity being demonstrated by the teaching staff to meet challenges, and the Technology Department's work to distribute 1:1 devices.
 - Jr.-Sr. High School:** Mr. Atherton reported that 55 students are learning remotely with approximately 430 students enrolled in the hybrid model. Students and staff are adjusting to the new long-block schedule and are successfully following safety protocols. Clubs, activities and sports are beginning.
- **Review of Student Enrollment:** The Superintendent shared the enrollment numbers at each grade

level for the Memorial School and the Jr.-Sr. High School. A brief discussion followed regarding the increase in enrollment since last school year.

- **Fall Coaching Assignments:** The Superintendent announced the following coaching assignments: Tony Cordani - JV Girls Soccer; Joe Drugan - Boys Cross Country; Michael Emus - JV Boys Soccer; Shelley Hynes - Varsity Field Hockey; Greg LaBossiere - Varsity Boys Soccer; Tim Maguire - Girls Cross Country; Jim McCallum - Golf; Katelyn Rizzo - JV Field Hockey; Juan Ruelas Garcia - JV Volleyball; Leah Sieftring - Varsity Girls Soccer.
- **Ratification of Calendar Adjustment:** The Chair and Superintendent sought the members' approval for a calendar change implemented recently to move the Early Release Day originally scheduled for October 8th to October 7th, an all remote learning day, to insure equity among hybrid learners. Upon a motion by Mrs. Alberto which was seconded by Mrs. McKeon, the members unanimously voted to ratify the calendar change.
- **Calendar Review:** The Superintendent and administrators will continue to review the district calendar to insure equity between cohorts since holidays and vacations may unequally impact in-person learning days. No additional revisions are necessary through the end of the calendar year. The calendar will be brought forward for review at the November meeting.
- **Kindergarten/Grades 1 and 2 Parent Petition:** The Superintendent presented a petition submitted by parents of primary grade students who are seeking a full in-person learning model at those grade levels. In establishing the current models, the Reopening Advisory Board considered safety in the buildings, instructional needs, and current budgetary and space limitations. A discussion followed regarding a minimum 3-foot distance between individuals, recent local health data, state and federal guidelines, and a potential schedule of five in-person half-days in place of the current two full days per week. The next meeting of the Reopening Advisory Board is scheduled for October 15th and the Superintendent will bring the petition and the discussions from this meeting to the members for consideration. Mrs. Crebase noted that she welcomes suggestions and recommendations from all stakeholders.
- **Budget:** The Superintendent proposed FY21 budget reductions in light of the override not passing on September 15th. She briefly reviewed that the original budget of \$13,080,913 had been presented to the Finance Committee on February 3, 2020 and that since that time reductions were proposed and recommended. The current recommended budget of \$12,386,000 reflects savings from attrition, out-of-district tuition, and transportation, as well as reductions in personnel, technology and facilities. Upon a motion by Mrs. Alberto which was seconded by Mrs. McKeon, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the recommended budget for consideration at the upcoming Special Town Meeting.
- **Superintendent's Goals:** The Superintendent presented her goals for the 2020-2021 year along with key actions and benchmarks. They include a professional practice goal to oversee contract negotiations for Unit A and Unit C, a student learning goal to develop and implement the reopening plan for in-person and remote learning, and a district improvement goal to update the district's strategic plan.
- **Memorandum of Understanding with HPD:** The Superintendent provided a Memorandum of Understanding between the Hopedale Schools and the Hopedale Police Department to coordinate efforts for student safety and to establish a protocol for reporting and response. After a brief discussion regarding the terms, the Memorandum was unanimously approved upon a motion by Mrs. Alberto which was seconded by Mrs. McKeon.

8. **Correspondence** –The Committee reviewed the Memorial School calendar for September and a memorandum from DESE Commissioner Jeffrey Riley dated September 14, 2020. In addition the Chair shared a memorandum from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees seeking a voting delegate from the Committee. By consensus, the members appointed the Chair to serve in that role. Mrs. Butler also announced a MASC workshop on Chapter 70 for town officials being offered on October 20, 2020.

9. **Audience to Citizens** - Due to this being a remote meeting, this item was passed over.

10. **School Committee Goals Workshop** - Members reviewed goals from the previous five years. After discussion and review of their most recent goals, the Committee developed new goals for the 2020-2021 year

which include professional development, policy review, outreach, negotiations, budgeting, strategic planning and evaluations. The Committee discussed scheduling a retreat.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 10, 2020.

Adjourn to Executive Session- The Chair announced the need to enter executive session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation since an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body. Upon a motion by Mrs. Alberto and seconded by Mrs. Hampsch, the members voted by roll call vote to enter executive session for the stated purposes as follows: Mrs. Alberto-yes; Mrs. Brytowski- yes; Mrs. McKeon-yes; Mrs. Hampsch-yes and Mrs. Butler-yes.. The Chair stated that the Committee would not be reconvening in public session and declared the meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne McGuane, Recording Secretary
APPROVED: November 10, 2020