

**Hopedale School Committee
Minutes of the Meeting of
Tuesday, May 3, 2022**

Members Present: Lisa Alberto, Chair
Kristi Brytowski, Vice Chair
Jennifer McKeon
Alysia Butler
Kaitlin Federico

Also Present: Karen Crebase, Superintendent
Derek Atherton, Jr-Sr High School Principal
Karen Cosgrove, Pupil Personnel Services Director
Lynne Davis, School Accountant
Brian Miller, Memorial School Principal
Kristen Poisson, Bright Beginnings Center Principal
Nora Hodgens, School Committee Representative and Student Council Co-Representative
Ashleigh Bourgeois and Gage Pavia, Student Council Representatives
Sarah Liska and Laura Buchanan, Class of 2023 Advisors

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Media Center at 25 Adin Street, Hopedale, Massachusetts, with a quorum present.

1. **Minutes of April 5, 2022** - Upon a motion by Mrs. Butler and seconded by Mrs. Brytowski, the minutes of the meeting of April 5, 2022 were unanimously approved.
2. **Student Representatives' Report** - The student representatives reported on recent and upcoming events, including class elections, the production of *Little Mermaid*, the Stuff-a-Bus collection of non-perishable items for the Milford Food Pantry, meetings and conferences, appreciation events for staff and administrators, Mr. Hopedale, a car wash fundraiser, and the annual ice cream social. Kelsey Evans and Matthew Carroll will serve as next year's representatives. The Committee thanked Nora Hodgens, Ashleigh Bourgeois and Gage Pavia for their dedicated representation of the Student Council and welcomed the new representatives.
3. **Superintendent's Comments** – The Superintendent reported on current COVID cases in the schools. She congratulated the DECA team on their recent successes and noted the return of the sixth grade students from Nature's Classroom. Ms. Crebase announced that the Annual Town Meeting has been scheduled for May 24th and that the upcoming Town Election will be held on May 10th. Gratitude and congratulations were extended to outgoing member, Lisa Alberto for her devoted twelve-year service to the district.
4. **Committee Response to Superintendent's Comments** - The Committee expressed gratitude to Mr. Miller for his efforts to ensure that the sixth grade students had the opportunity to experience the tradition of Nature's Classroom this year.
5. **Financial Items**
 - **Monthly Report of Accounts Payable Warrants:** The Committee reviewed the accounts payable report as presented by Mrs. Davis. Upon a motion by Mrs. McKeon and seconded by Mrs. Butler, the members unanimously voted to ratify the payment of six warrants dated: April 7 (two) and 21 (four), 2022 in the amount of \$568,994.75.

- **Monthly Report of Payroll Warrants:** Upon a motion by Mrs. McKeon and seconded by Mrs. Butler, the members unanimously voted to ratify the payment of two payroll warrants dated: April 7 and 21, 2022, in the amount of \$1,008,002.65
- **Monthly Budget Reports:** Mrs. Davis presented the monthly budget report.
- **Warrants for Signature:** There were no warrants distributed for signature.
- **Acceptance of Anonymous Donation:** Upon a motion by Mrs. Butler and seconded by Mrs. Brytowski, the Committee unanimously accepted an anonymous donation in the amount of \$8,000 to support the Jr.-Sr. High School Athletic Department's celebration of the Girls' Basketball State Championship.
- **Acceptance of Friends of Music Donation:** Upon a motion by Mrs. Butler and seconded by Mrs. Brytowski, the Committee unanimously accepted a donation in the amount of \$749.98 from the Hopedale Friends of Music for the purchase of two Yamaha Studio monitors for the Jr.-Sr. High School electronic music studio.

6. **Committee on Policy** - There were no policies brought forward for review.

7. **Committee on Budget**- The Superintendent reported that the Finance Committee has met four times since the last School Committee meeting and has reviewed anticipated revenues and expenditures for Fiscal Year 2023. Ms. Crebase and the Budget Subcommittee advised the members that they will be recommending a reduction of \$43,000 in the school department FY 2023 budget due to attrition. The members agreed to the revision by consensus.

8. **Agenda Items** -

- **School Choice for 2022-2023:** The School Committee reviewed a chart reflecting current school choice applications by grade, the number of applicants with priority under the School Committee policy and current enrollments by grade. A discussion followed regarding potential withdrawals by students accepted to Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical School, the number of residents enrolling for kindergarten, and the number of students applying at the higher grade levels. After discussion the Committee took the following actions:

Kindergarten: Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent and by consensus, the Committee postponed their review of applications for Kindergarten until their next meeting when there will be more complete information on resident enrollments at that grade level.

Grade 1: Upon a motion by Mrs. Brytowski and seconded by Mrs. Butler, the Committee voted to accept one student with priority as a sibling and to defer action on the remaining applications at this time due to class size.

Grade 2: Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent and by consensus, the Committee determined that there is no space to accept applications at this grade level.

Grade 3: Upon a motion by Mrs. Brytowski and seconded by Mrs. Butler, the Committee unanimously voted to accept the submitted applications at this grade level.

Grade 4: Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent and by consensus, the Committee deferred action at this time due to class size.

Grades 5 and 6: Upon separate motions by Mrs. Butler and seconded by Mrs. Brytowski, the Committee unanimously voted that there is no space to accept applications at these grade levels.

Grade 7: Upon a motion by Mrs. Brytowski and seconded by Mrs. Federico, the Committee unanimously voted to accept the submitted applications at this grade level.

Grade 8: Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent and by consensus, the Committee deferred action at this time due to class size.

Grade 9: Upon a motion by Mrs. Butler and seconded by Mrs. Brytowski, the Committee unanimously voted to accept students with priority as siblings and to defer action on the remaining applications at this time due to class size.

Grades 10, 11 and 12: Upon a motion by Mrs. Butler and seconded by Mrs. Brytowski, the Committee unanimously voted to accept the application submitted for tenth grade and not accept the applications at eleventh and twelfth grades due to class size and the challenges for meeting the district's rigorous graduation requirements.

The School Committee will revisit applications for Kindergarten and Grades 1, 4, 8 and 9 at their June 7th meeting.

- **Action Plans:** The Principals and PPS Director presented their School Action Plan progress reports which align with the district's strategic plan and incorporate the same four strategic objectives. With regard to Objective #1, *implementing the Acceleration Roadmap*, the administrators reported on SEL screening tools, community events, iReady data analysis, counseling services and academic supports. For Objective #2, *ensuring academic growth and the acquisition of skills to ensure recovery and progress for all students*, they highlighted efforts using multi-tiered systems of support, enrichment programs, making instructional decisions based on data, and curriculum reviews. Highlights for Objective #3, *ensuring growth in social/emotional competencies and the application of those skills*, are integration of academics and SEL, universal strategies to promote self-care, interventions, and the availability of additional counselors. Objective #4, *embracing and advancing a culture and climate that supports diversity, equity and inclusive practices*, focused on a return to previous events and programs, professional development, and the promotion of diversity and multicultural awareness throughout the district. A discussion followed regarding plans for this summer's extended school year program and a review of the 504 process. The Committee thanked the administrative team for their efforts and for their positive impact on students.
- **Parent Student Handbook Updates:** The Superintendent reported that, as part of the district's Tiered Focused Monitoring, DESE has recommended a review of our handbooks to confirm the inclusion of provisions regarding bullying, harassment, hazing and civil rights. In addition, they have recommended that the Committee review its Staff Conduct policy. These reviews are in process.
- **Superintendent Evaluation:** The Chair reviewed the process by which each member contributed individually to the Superintendent's annual evaluation and presented the composite narrative. On behalf of the Committee, Mrs. Alberto reviewed specific ratings based on the DESE Model Rubric and reported Ms. Crebase's overall performance during the 2021-2022 year as Proficient. Highlights include Ms. Crebase's leadership; her work to reopen the schools and relax COVID protocols within parameters that met the needs of students, staff and parents; budget management; communication; and her leadership among peers in the Blackstone Valley. Due to her pursuit of grant funding and transparency in presenting the budget to stakeholders, she has maintained an excellent and highly-sought public education for the district's students.
- **Public Hearing Date Confirmation:** By consensus, the Committee scheduled their Annual Public Hearing for Tuesday, May 24, 2022 at 6:30 pm in the high school media center, immediately prior to the Town Meeting.
- **Senior Activity Dates:** The Superintendent presented a list of activities for the Class of 2022 which begins with the Senior Tea on May 17th and culminates with Graduation on June 4th. The Superintendent took this opportunity to thank senior Nora Hodgins for her dedication serving as the School Committee's Student Representative.
- **Senior Class Field Trip Presentation:** Mrs. Liska and Mrs. Buchanan, Advisors for the Class of 2023, reported on the planning, itinerary and costs for the proposed Senior Trip for the fall. The trip to New York City would occur from October 7th through 10th. A discussion followed regarding the change from the traditional trip to Disney World, security, transportation and the ratio of chaperones to students.
- **Out-of-State Field Trip Approval:** The Committee reviewed the Out-of-State Field Trip request to approve the Class of 2023 Senior Trip to New York City as presented. Mrs. Butler moved to approve the trip and Mrs. Brytowski seconded the motion. Upon further discussion regarding chaperones and hotel security, Mrs. Butler amended her motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Brytowski, to approve the trip

with a 7:1 student to chaperone ratio and confirmation of hall monitors at the hotel. The members unanimously voted on the amended motion to approve the trip.

- **Search Update on Superintendent's Office Manager Position:** Mrs. McKeon served as the Committee's representative on the interview team and reported on the hiring process. Two finalists were selected for second interviews with the Superintendent. An offer was extended to Julie Tamaro who has accepted the position and will begin on June 13th.
- **BVT Enrollment Update for 2021-2022:** The Superintendent shared a chart which reflects the number of students who have been accepted to Blackstone Vocational Technical Regional High School since the 2017-2018 school year and those who attended each year. At this time, twenty-six students have been accepted for the 2022-2023 school year but the number of students who will attend is not yet confirmed. A discussion followed regarding curriculum updates at Hopedale Jr.-Sr. High School to retain students with vocational interests and the potential for establishing a task force to review data and reasons for students choosing to attend vocational schools.
- **Bus Registration Update:** The Superintendent reported that bus registration for the 2022-2023 school year is now open. There are currently 167 online registrations for kindergarten through 12th grade.
- **Appointment of Karen Crebase to BICO Board of Directors:** Upon a motion by Mrs. Butler and seconded by Mrs. Brytowski, the Committee unanimously appointed the Superintendent as the Hopedale Public Schools' representative to the BICO Board of Directors.

9. **Correspondence** - The Committee reviewed the BICO Quarterly Report dated April 19, 2022.

10. **Audience to Citizens** – No members of the audience asked to address the Committee.

The next regular meeting of the Committee is scheduled for June 7, 2022 at 6:00 pm.

Upon a request by the Chair to enter Executive Session for the purpose of a strategy session to discuss upcoming negotiations with the Superintendent, without returning to public session, a motion made by Mrs. McKeon was seconded by Mrs. Brytowski and the members voted as follows: Mrs. Mckeon - yes, Mrs. Butler - yes, Mrs. Brytowski - yes, Mrs. Federico - yes, and Mrs. Alberto - yes.

The meeting was declared adjourned at 8:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne McGuane, Recording Secretary
APPROVED: June 7, 2022