

South Hadley Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

SHCTV15 and SHCTV.com made possible by Governor Baker's June 16, 2021 remote meeting provision to the March 12, 2020 COVID-19 Emergency

I. Call to Order

Allison Schlachter, Chairperson, called the virtual meeting of the South Hadley School Committee to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: Dr. Jahmal Mosley, Superintendent of Schools
Mark McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Allison Schlachter, Chairperson
Allyson Garcia, Assistant Chairperson
Jennifer Matos
Danielle Cooke
Jennifer Voyik, Business Manager

Absent: Kaily Godek, Student Representative
Scott Beaulieu, President of SHEA

Guests: Amy Foley on behalf of SHEA
Judith Gooch,

II. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from September 2, September 16, October 7 and October 21 will be approved soon.

III. Approval of Warrants

Motion to approve warrants as read by Dr. Jen Matos, seconded by Allyson Garcia. Motion passed unanimously: 4/0 (Garcia, Cooke, Matos, Chair)

October 12, 2021	Warrant #2022-93	\$196,393.74
October 14, 2021	Bi-Weekly	\$711,269.07
October 19, 2021	Warrant #2022-99	\$122,192.57

South Hadley Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

IV. Reports of Standing Committees

None.

V. Public Comment

Chairperson A. Schlachter opened the floor for Public Comment and Jen Matos checked for requests. The Chair reminded viewers that there is a three (3) minute allowance to make a public comment, which will be on a timer. At the end of the time, you will be asked to bring it to a close.

No public comments.

VI. Discussion and Action Items

a. SHEA Updates

Amy Foley brought to the panel on behalf of Scott Beaulieu for SHEA. Dr. Mosley was not informed of Scott Beaulieu's absence. Ms. Foley wanted the public to hear the teacher's voices as well as the School Committee.

Mosier School staff met with the district leaders. They are excited to hear about the ramps on the portables. The work starting on those ramps so teachers can get back to those classrooms and return to normal routine in their own personal education settings in their classrooms.

Ms. Foley transitioned into the high school. As someone who knows what it's like to return to their own personal educational settings for their students. It will be the main focus of the SHEA update tonight. What the high school looks like right now for our students and our staff. Just an insight into what the students and the staff and families are feeling about returning to the high school.

First, she is appreciative to be back in person more than ever before. She loves seeing her students. What a world of difference. However, after a challenging start, she is aware of how difficult but due to the mold situation they are aware that there will be some challenges. The leadership meetings have been extremely productive. They have been open and comfortable conversations for us. They really appreciate and want to make it clear. They also know the challenges and frustrations of this year, we share with the district. The school committee and the district leadership, we know that DESE in some ways is really handcuffing us as far as

South Hadley Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

educating our students and getting back into the building and now making up the eleven days we missed.

Feedback from students and teachers about re-entry and making up the days. The loss of their personal items that they used to teach over the span of the years. Irreplaceable. Sentimental value of a rainstick made by her son in kindergarten that she used as a talking stick with students in certain activities. Explaining the sentimental value of the rain stick with her students has built some bond with students. Items that have been lost. We think every day that we are finding something that we used to have as a result of the mold. We look to find someone to blame for the mold, but mold has a mind of its own. She believes that it was a perfect storm that created the challenge of the mold. We came out of pandemic of remote teaching. We know the impact of that on everyone's mental health. We start back at school with the challenges of the mold; and now to be back to continue to find personal items that we have used in the past are missing really takes a toll. The teachers wanted the public and the school committee to know. She thinks it's important because we have a school that's ailing and does need some capital improvement. We understand, as you do, that it's important to help the Town understand that as well. But just beyond the facilities, there has been a lot more loss for us.

Concerns from the students and their families, as well as teachers and their families, on how we are going to make up these eleven (11) days. They have had some great conversations with the leadership in the District on how to think outside the box on how we're going to do this. They are frustrated with the process because of the guidelines that DESE is setting up for us and how we have to make up these days. We know there's the possibility of Saturdays. There are challenges with Saturdays. There are students that have jobs. We have teachers that have second jobs. We have paraprofessionals that have families and now have to get childcare. Based on what they make hourly to get childcare on a Saturday they might be losing money to go into work. They wanted to share the information and she realizes that you are probably aware that DESE is stating that we have to make these days up. They want them to be made up a certain way. We just want to make sure the conversation with the District leadership continues to be open and that we can continue to work together. We really appreciated it.

Another thing is the notification of when we're going to start making these days up. We don't think it would be ideal for anyone to only have a week's notice to have to go into school on a Saturday. It was discussed to start make up days in November and it's October 21st. They want to make sure that we get the information out to teachers and their families; students and their families; so that they can make arrangements for those days.

South Hadley Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

Ms. Foley continued that SHEA is looking forward to negotiations for their next contract. They sent their request and look forward to sitting down at the table to have a successful negotiation.

Chairperson Schlachter replied that she feels for the physical loss of things. Things are sentimental and valuable. Her heart goes out to all of them for those losses. She's hearing it.

She wants to be clear and makes sure she understands the process of choosing these make-up days. What is the first, second and third step of the process of choosing these days? She does agree and feel a sense of urgency to choose these days and let parents and families; not only our teachers (that would happen first to identify times). But let our families know what days are going to be impacted in their lives. If we're going to be taking out of school vacations, that matters; doing Saturdays, that matters. She requested that we publicly identify the steps of the process from Amy or Dr. Mosley.

Ms. Foley stated that when it comes to the school calendar, it's mainly the School Committee's decision making. They understand that and in the past, they have been able to give some feedback on the school calendar. They appreciate it. As high school union reps have been able to sit down with Dr. Mosley a few times. We started to identify dates. And we do have a list of dates that had this kind of been a work in progress. That we kind of been going back and forth with. We think some of the things that we have been discussing are the 180 days. What those 180 days look like? Meeting the 990 minutes that we have to meet and trying to be creative with that, whether that means adjusting hours of the school day. And what days, whether they're on the weekends, during vacations.

Chairperson A. Schlachter states, what identifies that is the first step. This is only step one is for the Union Representation and the Superintendent to put a plan together. Agree upon a plan, right? And then after that, what would be the next step. SHEA states, we think that plan would then be given to the School Committee and that really comes down to your approval. We don't know if I'm wrong about that or not. Chairperson states a Memorandum Agreement or understanding between the Union and the School Committee. SHEA states, we believe so, we believe that is what we're asking for that we have a draft of a MOA that has been going back and forth and part of the MOA is the dates for the eleven (11) days we have to meet. Chairperson states, as soon as that's prepared the School Committee can vote on that? Dr. Mosley is there anything that you want to add to that?

Dr. Mosley says there are a couple of things here that we just have to be careful with. We're still exchanging contract. This is a public forum here. And we're still in negotiations with this. So, there's a lot more than just the making up of the days. There's also a couple of other

South Hadley Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

considerations that are also going to financially impact the district, as well. So to be quite honest with you, we don't feel comfortable sharing this type of stuff publicly until we come to some type of understanding with the Union and with the School Committee of what that looks like. For the days of the make-up. The only thing we can comment on is it's 180 days. It only effects at this point, the high school in sense of make-up days. The K through 8 are in a different ballpark in a sense that they have already started their school year. So DESE has pretty clear guidelines around what that feels like, the make-up days. What 180 school days look like and so we have to comply with that and make sure that we are not facilitating, for instance Saturdays, and they don't count. So, we just want to be very careful how we facilitate that. There are a couple of ways you can do it, but there's the Saturdays, the vacation days and there's the case of "make it up on the back end". But that's not always the case if we have significant snow days, you still could be short makeup days because we're going to miss those days for the snow days. So that's the only comment at this point that we feel comfortable around just the days. We think one component of the proposal. There are other financial components that still need to be worked out.

Chairperson states that she appreciates that and all she wanted to be clear was the process. Because we know this was something the public was worried about and we want to be able to be very transparent about what is the process and how are we... not the details of what it says necessarily at this point, but what is going on. Where are we in that process? And you both answered that, so thank you.

SHEA continues if she could share one more thing and hopes that she is not overstepping her bounds as the role for the union or the school. But we know that when these days, when we are going to make up these days is probably the most pressing item in that MOA right now just because it impacts students, families, teachers and their families. And that we have kind of been in discussion about whether or not we need deal with that almost in a separate MOA. We don't know if you have to go, but just so we can decide on those days, get that information out. And then work on negotiating the rest of the stuff that has more of a monetary impact on the district. Just know that that's something we have been discussing. Maybe you'll never see me again because we just wasn't supposed to say that, but we think, you know in having an honest and open relationship, we just felt that might be helpful to the situation.

Chairperson states that she appreciates that... This is the way we earn respect and trust. Be open and transparent about the things we can be open and transparent. Of course, when things are in negotiations and they are confidential, you can't share those things. And that's just the way it is. But we just think that having a dialogue as much as we can in public is important because these are being worked on and looked at and they are not being ignored.

South Hadley Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

We imagine that families might be feeling the same kind of urgency that I'm feeling, and we wanted to address that and that's all. Thank you, thank you for being here.

Ms. Foley (SHEA) thanks her for having them and wishes Chair a Happy Birthday.

b. Report of the Superintendent

Dr. Jahmal Mosley stated that instead of leading with "What's wrong?" he wanted to discuss "What's happening in the district?" from school-to-school.

MOSIER SCHOOL

- Sunshine Fund has begun. This is an opportunity for teachers to share life experiences / events together and just kind of basically a community building within Mosier. Many times, that Sunshine Funds are used for school activities, Teacher Appreciation anything to augment the culture at Mosier.
- PTO has stated a school-wide building event to help every family. The grant activities include Trunk or Treat Night, which is a safe place to enjoy the Fall and do some creative opportunities.
- Professional Development did coaching, modeling and talked about student learning. They discussed challenges as we start to move out of COVID and into different areas of teaching and learning.

PLAINS SCHOOL

- All classes are using what is called Dojo, which is our online messaging system for our families. It provides daily updates, weekly classroom activities of local events.
- PTA is sponsoring a Fall Festival this Sunday to allow families to enjoy the fall fun.
- As we start to move into reopening our schools, we will get what we call these "old, but new events" resurface.
- Our fire department is coming to Plains next week to provide a development appropriate program for our students and our children around fire safety.

South Hadley Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

Michael E. Smith Middle School

- First Picture Day in almost two (2) years.
- Student Council has formed at our middle school as well.
- Afterschool clubs are starting to come online
- You can't miss the Lego movies and Lion King Junior.
- They also have Veteran's Day event for our 8th Grade Social Studies class to talk to veterans and their experiences.
- Spirit Day at the middle school showing their Team and School Spirit.

Not to usurp Amy's report at the high school, we will just be brief, and we will share a couple of things after.

South Hadley High School

- Student Council is coming online working with the Drug & Alcohol Coalition. The Student Council works to provide feedback to the administrators upon happenings and things at the high school that could improve, but also make us aware of things that are working very well.
- Celebrating the 2021 Junior Book Award for Academic Excellence on the 19th.
- South Hadley Improv show that will be hosted on Friday, October 29th. The band also qualified for MIAA Tournament will be taking place the end of the month.

Dr. Mosley introduced Christina Stevenson as our new administrative assistant welcomed her to our team. Christina has joined our team to helping us, (helping me) get these meetings off and facilitated so we wanted to welcome Christine to our team.

Discussion about testing and buildings as we move down the agenda.

Dr. Mosley stated that we have been in school for some time, for probably two (2) weeks total and when we say that we include the high school as well. It has been quite a journey in the sense that we really, really appreciate all of the staff, teachers, administrators, custodians, bus drivers, admin at the high school middle school and everywhere central office, for all of their work. There is the perception that we're out of the pandemic; and from my perspective,

South Hadley Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

we're not. We're just starting to work through it. We think it's taking a tremendous amount of challenges for our personal and professional lives and we want to personally say that I've seen the teachers and the staff do amazing work with our kids and students despite working what we would consider in this pandemic. This pandemic has affected our staff on a professional note, in a sense that, we say this jokingly, but we say this seriously, we don't ever think I've taken a health class in graduate school. We have taken many graduate courses at UMass College. We never took a Public Health class to use at public schools. So, we're all learning and trying to move in the same direction professionally. And personally, all of us have been affected by COVID one way or another, as well. So, we recognize and acknowledge everyone's hard work and perseverance during this difficult time.

c. Report of the Chair and School Committee

The Chairperson, Allison Schlachter states that on October 26th at 7:00 p.m. our School Committee will be having a joint meeting with the Selectboard to appoint our fifth school committee member. This appointment will cover the next six (6) months to finish out Charles Miles term. In April, there will be a regular town election. The Chair describes the process that there will be a televised and live ZOOM Meeting with both board members on October 26th at 7:00 p.m. They will have the opportunity to interview anyone who has applied; take a vote; and then appoint the person that has the most votes. By our next meeting, we will have a full board. It's an off-schedule training.

On October 28, 2021 at 6:00 p.m., the School Committee is scheduled to have a training with MASC (Massachusetts Association for School Committees). The training will be with our MASC representative, Liz Lafonde. This training will focus on best practices for evaluation of the superintendent. This will be a special school committee meeting and the MASC Training will be the only agenda item. Dr. Mosley and Mark McLaughlin will be trained on Massachusetts Evaluation Process and best practices. The meeting will be virtual and open to the public. It will not be live or televised due to time slots of other live broadcasts. It will be recorded and placed on the SHCTV15.com website for those who cannot join us and would like to see the training. It will be part of our public record.

Chairperson Schlachter expressed appreciation for the awesome new newsletter from the superintendent's office. She was pumped by the Tiger Pride, orange and tigers and great information. She was so excited to see it. That is the type of communication and the type of connection to the community that we had been working toward for years. To see it come to life was really wonderful. She thanked all the people behind the scenes that helped Dr. Mosley get that out with all that he has going on. It was greatly appreciated.

South Hadley Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

d. Final Reading of the DEI Statement

Jen Matos provided the DEI Statement to the School Committee for final approval. A few minor edits were made during discussion of the DEI Statement.

Racial Justice Task Force requested that the language be placed on all outgoing communications. If the School Committee would adopt this statement it would be on the following:

- Signatures for emails; and
- Read at every School Committee Meeting

Allyson Garcia and Danielle Cooke stated that this was the second reading and it was good to go. Dr. Mosley asked a question about “invisible identity”. Jen Santos explained the differences between a person with a historical marker in such things like a disability, whereas some disabilities are not visible. A person can use their privilege or “invisible identity” to speak up for others.

Dr. Mosley questioned whether his identity as a heterosexual, African-American male be his responsibility to stand up for others; or is that his privilege to make that decision. Jen Matos responded that more people should use their identity to be responsible to stand up for others to have the same rights as we do. We have this privilege so how can we share it? How can we make sure there’s more equality?

Allyson Garcia asked Jen Matos to reread the language that was discussed in the DEI Statement and asked if we wanted to use the word “responsibility” in that section. She does agree with the word and what it says. It was relocated in the statement for the final statement that is listed above.

The final DEI Statement is as follows:

“The South Hadley School District is committed to initiating and supporting policies, practices and pedagogies that promote social justice, diversity, and inclusion. In celebration of our collective rich diversity, we also seek to affirm and elevate historically marginalized identities and experiences. We are fervent in our belief that biased actions and hateful speech have no place in our learning community. As one unified South Hadley School District, our commitment to social justice and educational equity will be reflected in our daily operations including recruitment, admission, student and staff retention, responsibility and reinforcing upstander behavior, school and family support, hiring practices, curriculum, and respectful dialogue.”

South Hadley Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

Jen Matos asked what the process is so it can go on formal communications. Since it was the second reading. A motion was made by Jen Matos to adopt the final reading of the South Hadley School District DEI Statement, second by Allyson Garcia. No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously: 3/0 (Garcia, Cooke, Matos)

e. Master Plan Implementation Committee

Allyson Garcia introduced Judy Gooch was brought onto the panel to talk about the Master Plan Implementation Committee. She stated that “her hat is off to all of you” for dealing with what you had to deal with for the last 19 months. She applauds the grace under pressure and our dealing with the pressure.

Ms. Gooch discussed the status of the South Hadley Master Plan; the School Committee’s priorities; and how MPIC can be helpful to School Committee.

The update is still in draft form. The anticipation is that the draft will be ready for public comment by the end of the year. There will be at least one public hearing. Thirty (30) days after that the Planning Board can vote to adopt the new Master Plan. Town Meeting will be asked to endorse the new Master Plan at the Annual Town Meeting in May, but once the Planning Board adopts the plan that’s the plan. Until then, we are still working under the 2010 Plan.

The two (2) tasks that the School Committee had... one dealing with sidewalks and another dealing with facilities. The sidewalk is an ongoing thing. When the 2010 plan was being developed, the Town was searching for a new Superintendent and one of the reasons the School Committee list was so short was so the new superintendent could come in and add his/her ideas of what some of the tasks had to be; and ten (10) years later, same kind of situation. However, there were quite a few suggestions that people thought that schools should be involved in, which were developed with a lot of input of the School Committee and the Acting Superintendent. Don’t be too alarmed if some of those tasks, don’t look like thing that the School Committee wants to pursue. The real issue is to work toward some of the goals we are talking about like Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, for example. The tasks can change, as long as we’re moving toward the goals, we’re in good shape. No questions were requested by School Committee. Ms. Gooch stated that she would be glad to meet with Dr. Mosley to review the process or any questions.

South Hadley Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

MPIC is preparing a report that is going to Planning Board, the Selectboard and the new Town Administrator that will include current priorities of all the entities (approx. 29 that they monitor). She got a sense of what our priorities are, such as: mold issue; readjusting to in-person teaching and learning; make-up days; and issues around facilities. She asked if there are any other priorities that they can share with the Selectboard and the Planning Board?

Dr. Mosley stated that they would summarize all that she stated as “Capital Improvement” and we will provide all significant information to MPIC, Planning Board and whomever is asking for it. The other piece is the Human Capital. He will discuss more about it later. How are we going to attract, retain, qualify and be competitive for our teaching force for our administrators? That really talks about funding. Not just one increase one year, but something that’s sustainable. So, we can retain our most qualified individuals. We have a thoughtful statement about Diversity and Equity. We have to have an eco-system to support that statement. That doesn’t mean writing something, it means really practicing what we talk about, not just with the schools, but through the entire divisions within the Town. We can’t carry that torch alone, but we want to make sure that our light is lit up in the dark. If there are people looking for employment and need support not only as employees, but also to reside here, that they get the level of support and nurturing they need to call this place home.

The third thing requested by Ms. Gooch, is how can MPIC best help the schools move towards the goals they want? As Allyson Garcia knows, we are the only entity in town that routinely touches base with every single board committee/department and we get involved in making connections. We get involved a lot in sharing information. The thing that has become very obvious to us in the first decade of a master plan is that communications is an enormous issue. It’s not just communications between the Superintendent and School Committee. It’s communications between the schools and the public; between the schools and the Select board; between the Select board and the rest of the town. It’s information coming in as well as information going out to the public. One of the things that you will see in the Master Plan update that there’s going to be quite an emphasis on improving and enhancing the kinds of things you do. We were very pleased to hear about the new newsletter. That seems like a very good thing. She assumes that will be available to the public on our website. Dr. Mosley responds it is available. It’s the first edition, but we are looking to make it digital. Ms. Gooch states that would be a quick and easy way for people who don’t have kids in the school system and are not getting it directly to have some sense for what’s going on. Reaching out to the public is really important.

MPIC has not power. They have no carrots, no sticks. They have the ability to listen and then the ability to talk. Bearing that in mind, feel free to think about ways that they can be helpful to you. Please send requests and suggestions via email.

South Hadley Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

Dr. Mosley disagrees. He believes that MPIC does have power. He thinks that the fact that they go around getting information from various departments. The power is actually in the information gathering stages. The power is in letting us know how this connects or disconnects. If there is something that we can do to “close the circle” of communication. That in itself is a level of power that we actually need. We can’t be doing our own thing. If there’s any consolation to what you just said, we would like to enhance the information and consistency throughout the Town of South Hadley. The power of information and coordination can be enhanced so our mission around diversity and equity; our mission around capital improvement. How we’re making up spending money, but investments so that people understand it’s not only coming from school program, but various departments, as well.

Ms. Gooch states that the other thing that we will see in the Master Plan update is there’s a lot of emphasis on collaboration. Most of the tasks that face the town are too broad to be tackled by one committee or one department alone. Most of them require input in all sorts of directions. We have tried in the update to be as explicit as possible, where we can see a need for technology support, for example. The library gets involved in that, school committee gets involved in it. The senior center gets involved in it. SHELD gets involved in it. So we try to make a bunch of these connections explicit and we hope this type of thing will be useful. We will probably spur you to think about some other entities that out to be involved in various projects.

Chairperson Schlachter states that she admires the work of MPIC and what they are doing. It’s a great help to South Hadley. Keep it up and thanks for including them.

f. Report of Student Representative

Chairperson Allison Schlachter provided the report on behalf of the student representative, Kaily, verbatim from their document.

At **Plains School** the PTA is sponsoring a Fall Festival to be held on Sunday, October 24th on the outdoor grounds of Plains School. There will be carnival games, a bounce house, donut eating contest, decorating, bake sale, ice cream and more. Prizes will also be given out. This event will be for Plains families and all proceeds will go towards the PTA Organization. We also have a special appearance of “Terry the Tiger”. In the past, this was a special event enjoyed by so many and we hope to celebrate autumn with our Plains community. Many staff, volunteers and Principal Scala will be participating. We also had staff members submit three (3) grants to the Michael E. Smith Educational endowment to help support our school initiatives. We will be happy to share news, when and if the grants are approved.

South Hadley Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

At **Mosier**, everyone at Mosier is looking forward to the upcoming Spirit Day on October 29th. Students are encouraged to wear their orange and black South Hadley best or dress up as their favorite character. Students, faculty and staff are also excited about the PTO's fall activity, Trunk or Treat. Trunk or Treat will be taking place on Thursday, October 28th at Mosier from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. You may even catch a glimpse of Ms. Flynn dressed as your favorite Big Red Dog, Clifford.

Nothing to report at Michael E. Smith Middle School.

South Hadley High School Athletics – Congratulations to Gabby Maroney for scoring her 100th career point on Friday, October 15th at Mahar. Chairperson commented “BIG SHOT OUT TO GABBY! WOW!”

Senior Nights are coming up with the following days:

- Girls Field Hockey (today) vs. Palmer at 6:15 p.m.
- Girls Volleyball (10/22) vs. Chicopee Comp at 5:30 p.m.
- Football (10/22) vs. Putnam Academy at 7:00 p.m.
- Class of 2022 has extra lawn signs and magnets for sale. They will be first come, first served. Magnets are \$5 and lawn signs are \$15. Reach out to Kaily Godek khgodek2022@student.shschools.com or at our class Instagram page @shhs_2022 to get your sign or magnet today.
- Class of 2022 has also started sales on their raffle calendar. They would like to thank all of the families and local businesses that donated cards and gift baskets to the raffle. Calendars are \$10 each. Please see a senior to buy a calendar. Calendar sales will be going through to October 31st.
- Class of 2023 will be selling Food Grams during high school lunches the week of October 26th; and will be handing them out on October 29th. Please see Ruth Petrokowski, Casey Levreault, Maura Doolittle and Summer Avistataylor for more information. She hopes she said everyone's name right (Chair)
- Class of 2024 is currently planning a pancake breakfast with more information coming soon. Count me in for that (Chair)
- Class of 2025 Election Results: Class President is Alana McKay; Vice President is Jeremy Greenberg; Secretary is Jack Harrison; and Treasurer is Michael Bushman
- Music Department – The Marching Band will be celebrating their seniors at the football game on October 22nd. The Marching Band will be participating in the MICCA this Saturday as the last competition of the season. (Chair) side note, we love marching bands, they are so much fun. Big shot out to the bands with the flow motto and their amazing performance on Friday night in the dark at the football game.

South Hadley Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

- South Hadley Improv Troupe will be holding their second show of the year on Friday, October 29th at 6:00 p.m. in the school parking lot.
- Student Council would like to welcome the freshman members that joined us for our first member meeting on Wednesday, October 13th. Several Student Council members participated in their first leadership and dialogue training for new members. Throughout the year, they will continue to be trained to become mentors to students throughout their schools and in other schools. Student Council members in the high school have orange bandanas tied to their school bags. If students and visitors need help finding their way through the building; or have questions can approach anyone with an orange bandana on their backpack for help.
- Homecoming week will be held the week before Thanksgiving. Themes for the week will be announced.

g. COVID Protocol Updates

i. Communication and Process for COVID positive cases and quarantining

ii. Prevention Strategies

iii. Testing Program

Most of my colleagues, including myself, we believed that once we had vaccinations and we started the school year, that in some ways COVID would sort of subside and we would get back to the business of teaching and learning and the facilitation of our school year, and that's minus the mold. I've come to the realization and that's starting school and being in South Hadley over the last 3 or 4 months that COVID is going to be here for a long time, and we have to recognize that. We have to recognize that in a way that COVID is going to be part of our learning community, our practices for the foreseeable future. With that said, we have to think about some ways that we can continue keeping our kids in school as well as our staff. While also recognizing that COVID is affecting us personally and professionally one way or another. We know we're going to talk more about this, but we wanted to talk a little about testing and what the district is doing. But also, about some of the challenges that we're facing as we start to move and work in this COVID environment.

The first thing we wanted to talk to the School Committee as well as the community about staffing. We know we shared it in the *Tiger Times*, but we also felt that it was important to talk to the community and the School Committee about staffing. Staffing has been a challenge for this district. We would also go as far as to say that staffing has been a challenge

South Hadley Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

for most districts as well. People are making different decisions in this environment. There are many, many options out there. When we talk a little bit about our Master Plan, we will make reference to the financial pieces to it. Because other entities that are not connected to education are compensating people a lot more than what we can compete with. In addition to that, we are in competition with resources for teachers, nurses, paras in other districts and some of them are offering more compensation than we can offer at this time and some of them are not. So, when we have these openings, it's not by design, but we are really trying to fill those openings that we have in our district and that ranges from teaching, para educators, nurses and what have you. And as a result of not having staff, other people have taken on – what I call “pick up the slack” – because they're waiting to hire the right people for the right positions that are qualified, and this has been the norm since we started school. We recognize that COVID has forced some of our employees and potential employees to make different decisions in their lives. And that is more of personal choice, but then we struggle with that. We ask the public and the parents and the teachers to be patient with that and that we're going to find the right people, but it's going to take a lot more time. When we're communicating through email and teachers are not coming in and teaching. Teachers are coming in and staff is coming in to make sure that students are safe. They have a seating chart. They make sure that people have their masks on. They are making sure that they are safe. And they are making sure that they can do all they can to keep the learning process active and moving forward. We appreciate that and we know the parents appreciate that. This is very different environment and so he wanted to speak about staffing and then jump into the testing pieces of this as well.

Dr. Mosley states if there is anyone who is out there that is interested in these positions, should apply. We are trying to be as competitive as we can, but it's important that we get the right people.

We applied and were accepted into the State Testing. It's a little more complicated than just being accepted and having the facilitation of the test. For example, this is a private entity that partnered with the state. It's free – no doubt, it provides pool testing or rapid testing or testing opportunities in the event that we can potentially have an outbreak. We are making sure that we have the right staff to facilitate the testing with the CIC, which was mentioned in our newsletter. The State is also susceptible to not having enough nurses and staff as well. If there's a little glitch, it's not because the state doesn't care – It boils down to staffing. Staffing is essential in the big picture. The short game in this is the testing.

The testing works that you could test one student or staff member multiple times. As we start to think about how we want to launch this. As we start to think about where we want to be, it's more complicated than that in a sense that we have to have people to track it in our

South Hadley Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

district. This is just a tester. We have to have people in our, what we call Human Capital. To track how many kids are being tested; and where is this data going to be stored. In the event that the state decides not to fund this, we believe everyone in South Hadley would agree that we would like to continue moving forward with this. So, we still need to make sure that we have the right personnel to make sure that in the event that this program is not free next year or in two years, we can still provide that level of support.

The other thing is that we track, monitor and understand where our kids are with the vaccine, too. That takes a level of oversight and communication. The other thing that's coming up in the next month is that a whole new level of vaccinations are coming up because our elementary kids and some of our middle school kids are going to be eligible for the vaccine. Where can they go? Who's going to give it? Where can they go to get the information to make sure they get it safely? Who's going to monitor this? And all of this affects us, the district. The other thing that's coming out and we include myself in this, is that there's a booster coming out. Again, where can we get this? Who's going to monitor it? How are we going to track this? When we opened school, we have been actively pursuing our Nurse Manager and Certified Nurse Assistants to help us with this COVID-19 oversight for our district.

In school districts we have specialized departments, the Business Manager, Special Ed, Curriculum and Evaluation, and in some larger districts they have an ELL Department. We need to build a Health and Human Services Department even in our schools because this COVID is not going to go away.

The other piece that's happening, is that there's so much information coming from various sources and it's all fair and good. You have DPH (Department of Public Health), DESE, CDC, you have all these different entities, and we need to think about coordinating this and that's what we're doing right now. When we are finally up and running, it's going to be easier to track, easier to understand, but more importantly, it's going to be easier and smoother to get to our staff and to our public. **We want to keep our kids in school.** It's not a big department. Certainly, we want to bring in the right people to track, keep our kids in school, but also make sure our parents get the right information at the right time. We have been working on that, we have hired our Nurse Leader and we have secured two (2) Certified Nursing Assistants and that's just to start. There's so much we have to still do. And even when we have these people onboard; and even when we're at our full capacity, we still have to build that database. We have to build that checks and balances of our systems. We still have to make sure that when we have the educational component. We have the health component of how these intercepts but keep separate for or district and that's going to take time. It's going to take time because everyone is new to this. And we said this in the beginning of the meeting, we didn't take one

South Hadley Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

health class during my doctorate work at UMass Amherst. We think we will take more now than we ever have before.

We want the public to know and the School Committee to know, that we're very committed to testing. We don't want kids sent home. We also want to make sure that we keep kids and staff safe. We also bear the responsibility of the health and wellness of our kids and our staff. We don't do this, and we don't take these steps lightly. All of this is to make sure that we stay in person. At the same time our kids and our faculty stay safe. This is not something that has ever been done before. Understand that there will be a trial and errors because we are going to make mistakes. We take full responsibilities for all the mistakes that are going to be made and We take it now.

The other thing we wanted to talk to the public about is the Dashboard. We know the dashboard can feel like the state is saying one thing but we're saying a different thing. What we said is that we would update it daily. When we get accurate information, sometimes it takes more than a day. Sometimes it takes a couple of days. Sometimes it doesn't always mirror what the state represents because there's a lag and sometimes we don't have verification. That's not to mislead the public or mislead the School Committee or anything like that but understanding that it's non healthcare providers who are trying to do the best they can with this dashboard. For the next Tiger Times, what we're going to say is that the Dashboard will be updated on that Saturday before or after noon of that week. Therefore, that gives a week to have all of the information, the best we can, so that people can see that. We apologize if some of the information is not accurate, but we are just trying to do the best we can to make sure that we get verification before we actually put it on that board.

We're also being asked by Wednesday by 5:00 p.m. that we need to report the cases of COVID to the state as well. Sometimes that information is not updated until the next Wednesday too. That's not to mislead the public or anything like that, it's just the way that it works. Our ultimate goal is to keep as much information to all of you and to the public as much as we can so you can make the decisions and stay informed of the necessary precautions.

Confirmed with Dr. McLaughlin if we missed anything with regards to testing. Dr. McLaughlin stated that it was covered very well. Dr. Mosley asked Ms. Voyik if we missed anything as well. She stated that there were questions of when the testing was possibly going to start; and can they opt out or can they opt in? What's that process going to be? Dr. Mosley confirmed that the testing is optional, and you have to give consent to enroll. The testing is optional, and you have to be given consent to enroll. As soon as we have the confirmation. We have everyone in place. We know how x and y are connecting, not halfway connected, we are going to get that out to you. It's a great question, which made me think about something else. We are going to be methodical on rolling this out. He knows that the public

South Hadley Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

would appreciate this, that we don't want to start something without being practical and prudent. Then the public will be really upset because they don't know how this fall into the big picture; and they're not going to get the testing accurate. So, what we want to do is to make sure the state system is up and running but we also want to make sure that our system is running in conjuncture with the state. In addition to that, making sure that our infrastructure can support the new wave of vaccinations and that's going to be happening in about one more month. Honestly, probably within the foreseeable future. The things that come into my mind sometimes is around new families coming in. So those are the types of things that we want us to think about.

Dr. McLaughlin added a couple of items. It's important to point out that if we had the ability, we would have this up and running now. But it's important to know that we're at the whim of the CIC, which is the organization that partners with the state. It provides this Test & Stay service. We can't go faster than they do. At the moment, we're waiting for onboarding process. We have our approval, but they completely own that process. We have to wait until they're ready to tell us... We're ready to onboard you now. And onboarding includes final information about receiving the testing kit; final information about the personnel that they can share with out community. Because as Dr. Mosley has said tonight and previously, we currently don't have the personnel. As hard as our fantastic nurses' work, we don't have the personnel at the moment to implement that Test & Stay in the way that we would want to. So as Dr. Mosley pointed out, hiring the CNAs and the Nurse leader is a huge step in that direction. The promise of the Test & Stay program is that it comes with personnel provided by CIC or a separate contractor. So, folks wondering, why isn't it up and running since you got approved? We think it's important to just know the fact of the matter is there's still several steps that are entirely in the wheelhouse of the administrator; and they have just not gotten back to us yet. We are ready to go as soon as they tell us, "We can onboard you now." Then the steps follow. Once that happens, we will have a coherent plan of rollout and communicating. He just thinks that it's important to communicate that we don't have complete control of the rollout process.

Dr. Mosley states that more information to come. This is not a one and done. There is more information coming. This is an introductory and this is a follow-up to the newsletter. As soon as we get more information, we can really start to move forward with this. We will make that available. We hear and understand the frustration around testing. We hear parents. We agree with you and we (the collective we) are moving as fast as we can to make this come to fruition and make this a reality for our parents and our kids, for our staff and for our families in South Hadley.

South Hadley Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

Chairperson Schlachter stated that she had to step away and questioned if this was the end of our COVID update. Dr. Mosley stated that this was the end of Part 1. There are more parts to the book. Chair asked if it was the end for this evening. Dr. Mosley stated that another chapter at another time may be discussed. The Chair acknowledged that if you do have questions about this that have not been answered or do not get answered at the end of tonight's meeting and you would like to email, you may. There is Public Comment at the beginning of every meeting and then the floor is closed for public comment. So if there's anyone on the line who would like to address the committee that is done at the beginning of every meeting.

Chair stated that she wanted to move forward to the Michael E. Smith Middle School Network agenda. Dr. Mosley asked Jennifer Voyik to provide a brief overview of what's happening over there and the steps to moving forward.

h. Michael E. Smith Middle School Network

Jennifer Voyik brought Steve Ziobrowski to the panel to discuss the status. Dr. Mosley asked Steve Ziobrowski what happened with regards to the phones; and asked what the process would be to rectify it in the future. What happens next steps? Is it fixed?

Mr. Ziobrowski responded that basically what happened was they had a network wide issue that they were trouble shooting. During off hours operations, they had a third-party vendor come in to try to assist with the issues that they originally had; and in fixing one problem, they created another. That wasn't noticed until the following morning when they notified me. We notified the building Principal, Mr. Gallagher. They reviewed their notes from the previous night. They basically rolled back what the vendor was working on to get the system back up and running. This was an isolated incident and don't see this problem to be popping up again. The reason we had to bring them in to begin with has been fixed and solved. He does not foresee this to be happening again.

Jenn Voyik asked Mr. Ziobrowski to discuss the change in communication. A communication was sent out to from Central Office, letting families know that they wouldn't be able reach the school directly. But once the issue was solved what changes are, we going to make in the future to make sure families know that the situation has been solved.

Steve Ziobrowski states that what we plan to do is continue with the All Call, All Email solution, as well as posting straight to the website. We're going to use the onscreen alerts that we will be using for snow cancellations, etc. If there's a building wide issue moving forward that is

South Hadley Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

going to affect any communications whatsoever between parents and the school system, it will be posted on that individual building, unless it's more wide-spread. So basically, when you go to the website, the first thing you are going to see is that bright screen alert and it will give you a status update of what's going on; where we are in the process if there is a process; and when the problem is resolved.

Chairperson Schlachter states that it sounds like a great plan. She further states that this brings up another reminder for everyone that we are really working on our website in a global way and that more as time goes on, the website is an important place to look. She's not used to that in the past, so that's an adjustment that she personally has to make as a parent too, but that's a good reminder to look at the website...

Mr. Ziobrowski states that we have some good surprises coming down the pipe so stay tuned. Dr. Mosley states "That's called a teaser." And states that they better deliver.

Mr. Ziobrowski says he has been in the industry too long not to back up the words. Dr. Mosley continues that people get upset if the teaser is not necessarily, that good. Just to say. Like a teaser to a good movie that's not a good movie. Steve says he's his worse critic when it comes to it.

Chair asked if there are any follow-up for Steve Ziobrowski. None.

i. Facility Building Repairs

i. Mosier School

Chair requests that we move on to Facility repairs at Mosier. Dr. Mosley differs to Jenn Vioyik to allow another voice to talk. Jenn Vioyik stated that we filed for a waiver through DCAM. (Department of Construction and Maintenance?) We did file the DCAM letter, and we were approved for the waiver. We were able to move forward because this is an emergency situation. We contracted with La Rochelle, who gave a quote to get the work done to both stairs and the ramp. They are currently working on pulling the permits and having the design done and approved so that we can move forward. They're getting very close so we can start. The latest update is that they're hoping to start construction next week. We will keep you up to date on the next meeting, but hopefully they are starting next week. The hope is to have within the next month to have students and staff back to the Mosier portables.

South Hadley Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

Dr. Mosley wanted to get back to the staffing piece affects other industries as well, whether its private or public. Depending on La Rochelle's personnel, it can take them time because they have to find the right people to do the work too. So, everything has a chain and ripple reflect so we go back to just being patient. We're working on it. They're pulling the building permits. This is in progress and we thank the Mosier teachers. We thank them for their understanding and their patience. We thank Principal Flynn for all of her work. Dr. McLaughlin and Jen for staying on top of this. If you need more information, go to the Tiger Times. It says the same thing.

Chairperson Schlachter stated that on behalf of the School Committee, our School Committee recognizes, and our hearts go out, just like our hearts went out to the teachers at the high school and still go out to them for their losses of personal items. Our hearts go out to the teachers at Mosier. We know that the Mosier building has been in a rough place for a long time and that must impact how it feels to go to work every day. We really do care. We are listening and we see you. We are going to work to improve this for you. Just wanted to add that. Anything else about Mosier before we move on? No response.

Chairperson Schlachter responded 'Moving into Test & Stay?' Dr. Mosley confirmed that we already talked about that. Chair asked about District Wide Staffing. Dr. Mosley confirmed we already talked about that also. Chair confirms that ends our discussion and action items.

VII. Information Only

None.

VIII. Unfinished Business

None.

IX. New Business

None.

South Hadley Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2021

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV15 or SHCTV15.com

Chairperson acknowledged that they will be going into Executive Session tonight; and will not be returning to Open Session. Chair requests a Motion to move into Executive Session under M.G.L. c. 30A, Sec. 21A (3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining for all bargaining units including A, C, D and E. Moved by Jennifer Matos and second by Allyson Garcia.

With no further business to discuss, there was a roll call vote passed unanimously (Garcia, Cook, Matos and Proctor). Chair stated that the Open Session was adjourned and will go into Executive Session. The School Committee Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.