

South Hadley Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2023

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV on Comcast Channel 12

I. Call to Order

Noticing a quorum, Chairperson, Allison Schlachter called the virtual School Committee Meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. A Zoom video conference meeting accessible via SHCTV and SHCTV.com made possible by Governor Baker's June 16, 2021, remote meeting provision to the March 12, 2020, COVID-19 Emergency

In Attendance: Allison Schlachter, Chairperson; Eric Friesner, Vice Chairperson; Danielle Cooke, Member; Lynda Pickbourn-Smith, Member; Kyle Belanger, Member; Junoon Giridhar, Student Representative; Mark McLaughlin, Interim Superintendent for South Hadley Public Schools; and Jennifer Voyik, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Business Operations for South Hadley Public Schools.

Guests: Cindy Flynn, Mosier Principal; Carla Lussier, Plains Principal; Amy Langdon, Assistant Director of Student Services.

Absent: Amy Foley, SHEA President.

II. Public Comment: NONE

III. SHEA Report: NONE

IV. Routine Items

A. Approval of Warrants (2 VOTES)

Date	Number	Amount
December 27, 2022	Warrant #2023-152	\$104,452.49
January 5, 2023	Biweekly Payroll	\$744,560.93
January 10, 2023	Warrant #2023-162	\$262,967.48
January 19, 2023	Biweekly Payroll	\$742,529.92

(VOTE) D. Cooke made a motion to all those eligible to vote to approve warrant dated January 10, 2023, Warrant #2023-162 in the amount of \$262,967.48.

K. Belanger seconded the motion.

No further discussion.

E. Friesner – Aye; D. Cooke – Abstained; L. Pickbourn – Aye; K. Belanger – Aye; A. Schlachter – Aye.

This motion passed with 4 ayes and 1 abstention.

(VOTE) D. Cooke made a motion to approve the following warrants, Warrant #2023-152 dated December 27, 2022, in the amount of \$104,452.49; Biweekly Payroll dated January 5, 2023, in the amount of \$744,560.93; and Biweekly Payroll dated January 19, 2023, in the amount of \$742,529.92.

South Hadley Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2023

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV on Comcast Channel 12

K. Belanger seconded the motion.

E. Friesner – Aye; D. Cooke – Aye; L. Pickbourn – Aye; K. Belanger – Aye; A. Schlachter – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously.

B. Approval of Minutes (VOTE): 01/05/2023

(VOTE) Chairperson Schlachter entertained a motion to approve the minutes from January 5, 2023.

E. Friesner so moved.

L. Pickbourn seconded.

E. Friesner – Aye; D. Cooke – Aye; L. Pickbourn – Aye; K. Belanger – Aye; A. Schlachter – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously.

V. Reports of Standing Committees

A. School Committee Liaison Reports

- 1. Racial Justice Task Force:** D. Cooke shared that after a long break the task force met last week and excitedly were able to review and approve a student application to join the task force. They are welcoming SHHS Junior, Sandra Chepchumba Koskey, who will be joining the next task force meeting in February. A goal for the next four meetings was drafted. They are looking forward to drafting a policy to bring before the School Committee for review, collaborating with Northampton Public Schools to learn of their success and work towards a greater community presence. The task force is still looking to have up to two more students join and they will accept that on a rolling basis.

B. Advisory Committees

C. Site-based Committees

- D. Report of Student Representative:** Junoon Giridhar, Student Representative presented: Mosier: Excitement for Thunderbirds Night Out on Friday, January 27, 2023. Principal Flynn and Principal Lussier are really looking forward to seeing their students sing their hearts out. MESM: The drama production of Frozen is going on and it is looking very well. Auditions will be held within the next few weeks and the play will be in March. Band and Chorus Programs are up and running as an afterschool program. SHHS: SHimprov 1/27/23 at 6pm in the auditorium. Congratulations to Moira Doolittle on being accepted on All-State Chorus as an alto. Good luck extended to those who are playing at the Mass Mutual Center tonight.

E. Report of Acting Superintendent: NONE

- F. Report of the Chair and School Committee:** E. Friesner shared that papers are available at Town Hall for anyone who is interested in running for any of the open seats. Chairperson Schlachter spoke about the Tri Board Meeting that was held on 1/24/23, which was recorded and is available on <https://shctv15.com/>. Two important votes took place, the first, the creation of a joint Facilities Department between the Town and the Schools for the fiscal year 2024 budget and to direct the Town Administrator and Superintendent to draft a

South Hadley Public Schools

School Committee Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2023

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV on Comcast Channel 12

MOA to bring before the Selectboard and School Committee. Discussion on this is planned for the February 7th Selectboard Meeting. The second vote was in support of the submission of a statement of interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority for Mosier Elementary School, which is the Town pleading their case for the need to rebuild or renovate. This authorizes the district to draft the statement of interest for the April 14, 2023, deadline and a formal vote would be taken by the School Committee and the Selectboard prior to that deadline.

G. Appreciations: M. McLaughlin expressed appreciation to the Town Administrator, Lisa Wong.

VI. Information concerning Elementary Literacy Program Changes: A slideshow was presented by M. McLaughlin, C. Flynn, C. Lussier & A. Langdon. A resource in the form of a podcast was suggested, <https://features.apmreports.org/sold-a-story/>. The District is applying for a multi-year grant. The first portion of the grant would be awarded, if approved, for this school year, 2022-2023. Some plans are contingent on the grant because of the cost but some aspects do not. J. Voyik asked C. Flynn to expound upon how the plan looks to support teachers for this roll out. Admin is working hard on the 2023-2024 budget to schedule the professional learning communities to meet once a week, every week for the next school year, time devoted within faculty meetings and some professional developments of the science of reading. If the grant comes through the teachers will be provided with summer drop-in sessions to offer additional support. Some statistics were shared; overall, the most recent MCAS scores show 34% of South Hadley students in grades 3-8 scored “meets expectations” on the ELA MCAS, compared to 41% overall in the state of Massachusetts. 2019 scores of ELA MCAS scores demonstrate 41% of students in SH “meets expectations” compared to 52% overall in the state of Massachusetts. Students on IEPs in grades 3-8 who were “meet or exceed expectations” on the ELA MCAS was 5%, compared to 16% overall in the state of Massachusetts.

VII. Discussion regarding Social Emotional Wellness Needs: Mark McLaughlin introduced district social worker, Courtney Mackey, who presented a slideshow. M. McLaughlin mentioned that this was shared to demonstrate to the School Committee and community the intersection between students’ social emotional well-being and their academic achievement. C. Mackey shared some numbers of chronic absenteeism. DESE reports chronic absenteeism as the percentage of students missing 10% or more of their days in membership regardless of whether such absences are excused or unexcused. As of 1/24/23 chronic absences with SHPS are as follows, 26% at Plains, 17% at Mosier, 22% at MESM and 26% at SHHS. Some other relevant statistics provided were, 25% of students on an IEP that qualify for emotional/ADHD/health needs, 62% of students on a 504 qualify for emotional/ADHD/health needs, 55% of students who meet weekly with counselors that are not identified by a 504 or IEP and 41% of students have active safety plans. SHPS has partnered with Care Solace, 49 referrals have been made for

South Hadley Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2023

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV on Comcast Channel 12

outpatient care and 4,000 communications have been made ytd, anxiety, depression and trauma being the leading causes. The definition and benefits of social emotional learning were relayed one being that for every dollar invested in SEL there is an \$11 return, savings from costs not incurred for intervention. Another was the positive impact SEL has on teachers and staff retention. J. Voyik shared that there is a grant available for mental health that Admin has just been made aware of. Courtney and Mary Walsh will meet next week in preparation for submission. An acronym was shared P.U.S.H. planful, urgent, supported by data and headed forward which is applicable to both SEL and the literacy program.

VIII. Update on Renaming Plains Elementary School: M. McLaughlin stated the next step is working with the State to work through the details of renaming Plains. The process is underway. Admin has also been in correspondence with the Town regarding signage, the process and timeline.

IX. Ratification of Unit E Contract (2 VOTES):

(VOTE) Chairperson Schlachter entertained a motion to accept the proposed contract for Unit E, one-year for 2021-2022 as ratified by the South Hadley Education Association.

K. Belanger so moved.

D. Cooke seconded.

No further discussion.

E. Friesner – Aye; D. Cooke – Aye; L. Pickbourn – Aye; K. Belanger – Aye; A. Schlachter – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously.

(VOTE) Chairperson Schlachter entertained a motion to accept the proposed contract for Unit E, three-year for 2022-2025 as ratified by the South Hadley Education Association.

D. Cooke so moved.

K. Belanger seconded.

No further discussion.

E. Friesner – Aye; D. Cooke – Aye; L. Pickbourn – Aye; K. Belanger – Aye; A. Schlachter – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously.

X. Ratification of Unit A Contract (2 VOTES): 4-year contract, 2%, 2%, 2.5% and 3%.

(VOTE) Chairperson Schlachter entertained a motion to accept the proposed contract for Unit A, one-year for 2021-2022 as ratified by the South Hadley Education Association.

D. Cooke so moved.

Pickbourn seconded.

No further discussion.

E. Friesner – Aye; D. Cooke – Aye; L. Pickbourn – Aye; K. Belanger – Aye; A. Schlachter – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously.

(VOTE) Chairperson Schlachter entertained a motion to accept the proposed contract for Unit A, three-year for 2022-2025 as ratified by the South Hadley Education Association.

K. Belanger so moved.

D. Cooke seconded.

South Hadley Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2023

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV on Comcast Channel 12

No further discussion.

E. Friesner – Aye; D. Cooke – Aye; L. Pickbourn – Aye; K. Belanger – Aye; A. Schlachter – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously.

- XI. Ratification of Unit C Contract (3 VOTES):** There is a one-year trial outlined in the MOA, Department heads will teach 4 classes instead of five to provide additional time for departmental collaboration, support for new faculty, observations, analyzing MCAS scores. The head of guidance will have 25% less of a caseload than other counselors. The Student Services Department chair will be reduced from teaching four classes to two classes and that additional time would be to help support staff evaluations, facilitating student accommodation requests for standardizes testing and special education testing and eligibility.
- (VOTE)** Chairperson Schlachter entertained a motion to accept the proposed contract for Unit C, one-year for 2021-2022 as ratified by the South Hadley Education Association.
Pickbourn so moved.
Danielle Cooke seconded.
No further discussion.
E. Friesner – Aye; D. Cooke – Aye; L. Pickbourn – Aye; K. Belanger – Aye; A. Schlachter – Aye.
This motion passed unanimously.
- (VOTE)** Chairperson Schlachter entertained a motion to accept the proposed contract for Unit C, three-year for 2022-2025 as ratified by the South Hadley Education Association.
L. Pickbourn so moved.
D. Cooke seconded.
No further discussion.
E. Friesner – Aye; D. Cooke – Aye; L. Pickbourn – Aye; K. Belanger – Aye; A. Schlachter – Aye.
This motion passed unanimously.
- (VOTE)** Chairperson Schlachter entertained a motion to accept the proposed MOA for Unit C, for 2023-2024 as proposed and as ratified by the South Hadley Education Association.
K. Belanger so moved.
D. Cooke seconded.
No further discussion.
E. Friesner – Aye; D. Cooke – Aye; L. Pickbourn – Aye; K. Belanger – Aye; A. Schlachter – Aye.
This motion passed unanimously.
- XII. Information Only**
- XIII. Unfinished Business**
- XIV. New Business**
Chairperson Schlachter entertained a motion to adjourn. E. Friesner so moved. D. Cooke seconded. E. Friesner – Aye; D. Cooke – Aye; L. Pickbourn – Aye; K. Belanger – Aye; A. Schlachter – Aye. This motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:33p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Kiesha Keitt Executive Assistant, South Hadley Public Schools. Date: 2/16/2023