

South Hadley Public Schools School Committee Meeting Minutes

March 16, 2023

Video Conference Meeting Accessible via SHCTV1 or SHCTV1.com

I. Call to Order

Noticing a quorum, Chairperson, Allison Schlachter called the virtual School Committee Meeting to order at 7:29p.m. A Zoom video conference meeting accessible via SHCTV15 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; and Mark McLaughlin, Interim Superintendent for South Hadley Public Schools.

Guests: Amy Foley, SHEA President; Beth Cooke, Director of Student Services; & Chris Fontaine, Principal of MESMS.

Absent: Jennifer Voyik, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Business Operations for South Hadley Public Schools & Junoon Giridhar, Student Representative

II. Public Comment: NONE

III. **SHEA Report: Presented by Vice President of SHEA, Neil Bergstrom:** "SHEA members for the Joint Labor Management Committee are set and look forward to working on the structure of special education in our district. SHEA also has the bargaining team in place to start working with our district in the Michael E. Smith Middle School daily schedule. Teachers are looking forward to change. Members are registered to attend an early April informational session that the Western Mass MTA Office is holding on school safety. One of the many topics we look forward to discussing is the impact of new laws and regulations around student suspension and how this may impact the safety of our schools. SHEA says congratulations to Dianne Young, one of our Grinspoon Award winners. Dianne is an excellent teacher and her dedication to craft of teaching and her students is impeccable. Congratulations to our second Grinspoon Award winner Ashley Macey. We greatly appreciate the energy, enthusiasm and care she has for her first-grade students. Two people at MESMS we would like to recognize, Stefani Holmes and Dr. Blaisdell, for the amazing Frozen production; sold out shows all weekend and tireless dedication to prepare students since the beginning of the school year. They did a fantastic job and we can't wait to see what they are going to select for next year's production. Over at Mosier, SHEA would like to give a shout-out to Danielle Kelley for her amazing dedication putting in long hours recently to prepare for the mid-year implementation of the new curriculum for students."

IV. Routine Items

A. Approval of Warrants (2 VOTES)

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Date	Number	Amount
February 28, 2023	Warrant #2023-210	\$243,128.53
March 16, 2023	Biweekly Payroll	\$775,449.37

(VOTE) Danielle Cooke made a motion for those eligible to approve the following warrant, Warrant February 28, 2023, it is Warrant #2023-210 in the amount of \$243,128.53.

Kyle Belanger seconded.

No further discussion.

E. Friesner – Aye; Danielle Cooke – Abstained; Lynda Pickbourn – Aye; Kyle Belanger – Aye & Allison Schlachter – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously, 4 in favor and one abstention.

(VOTE) Danielle Cooke made a motion to approve the following warrant, it is dated March 16, 2023, it is a biweekly payroll in the amount of \$775,449.37.

Kyle Belanger seconded.

No further discussion.

E. Friesner – Aye; Danielle Cooke – Aye; Lynda Pickbourn – Aye; Kyle Belanger – Aye & Allison Schlachter – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

V. Reports of Standing Committees

A. School Committee Liaison Reports

- 1. Racial Justice Task Force Update:** Danielle Cooke shared that the task force met March 15th, 2023, in person at South Hadley High and welcomed their student member Sandra Koski who joined for her first session. Danielle Expressed that it was really nice to have a student voice involved because they are diving into policy drafting like mentioned in the last School Committee Meeting. They are having to have a draft of the policy that we've been discussing for the committee after the April election. They will be meeting in April to finalize that. In the discussion of policy drafting, it came up about a request to revive the district Diversity Committee and see if there is anything the task force can do to help. They are finding that it would be nice to have a partnership within the district not only to get their input on policies and following up with teacher training on how to carry out policies. The task force is looking for an update on the equity commission. The Task Force will also have a couple forthcoming openings, one for a School Committee Member and a representative from Plains. Kyle Belanger explained the differences between the Diversity Committee and the Racial Justice Task Force and vertical alignment. Danielle Cooke read the District's Diversity Committee's mission statement,

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“Our vision is to develop and nurture community where everyone can reach their full potential in the South Hadley Public Schools. We provide resources that promote equal access and opportunity for all people in order to achieve a prosperous society and we advocate for policies that promote diversity and inclusion. Our goal is to empower all members of our community in order to remove barriers throughout our district caused by social injustice in equality and trauma caused by discrimination due to gender, race, color, religion, national origin, culture, sexual orientation, homelessness, gender identity and presentation, disability and ability and socio-economic status. We are committed to engaging the voices of our community to promote equality and compassion for all. The Diversity Committee will work to promote greater diversity in the schools by recommending strategic initiatives to recruit, support and retain staff from diverse backgrounds, assist leadership in the implementation of strategic initiatives proposed by the Diversity Committee, support staff members in continuing their education and providing resources to continue to be lifelong learners as we address our own biases, promote participation and activities supporting diversity in our schools, communicate diversity and inclusion initiatives, actions and results to all interested parties and develop inclusive language practices throughout the district.”

B. Advisory Committees

C. Site-based Committees

D. Report of Student Representative: NONE

E. Report of Interim Superintendent: Mark McLaughlin reported on literacy initiatives born of triangulated data from MCAS and iReady assessments and work that is being done by administration on handbooks, grading systems and reporting systems. M. McLaughlin also forecasted things that will be forthcoming to the committee pertaining to programming or revisions that ought to be universal in the district that currently are not.

F. Report of the Chair and School Committee: Chair Schlacter gave an update on the most recent decision about remote meetings.

G. Appreciations: Chair Schlachter - Dr. Blaisdell, Stefani Holmes, the students and all that came out in support of the production. Kyle Belanger - the Selectboard, the collaboration between the Town entities, and Andrea Miles for the motion she made in the joint meeting. Mark McLaughlin echoed Kyle and the School Committee for their appreciation of the Selectboard. Danielle Cooke – Megan Barlette, President of Plains PTO. Lynda Pickbourn – the work staff and teachers continue to do, Mark McLaughlin, Lisa Wong and the Selectboard.

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- VI. MOA Regarding Oversight of Speech & Language Pathology Assistants (VOTE):** Beth Cooke asked the School Committee to consider the memorandum of agreement with the South Hadley Education Association for pilot program to hire speech and language assistants.

(VOTE) Chair Schlachter entertained a motion to approve the MOA regarding oversight of Speech and Language Pathology Assistants.

Kyle Belanger so moved.

Lynda Pickbourn seconded.

No further discussion.

E. Friesner – Aye; Danielle Cooke – Aye; Lynda Pickbourn – Aye; Kyle Belanger – Aye & Allison Schlachter – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Beth Cooke shared the Special Education Parent Advisory (SEPAC) meeting scheduled for March 21, 2023, 6pm at Plains Elementary School, where Beth and Amy Langdon will be reviewing basic right and understanding IEPs.

- VII. MESMS 7th Grade Bronx Zoo Field Trip (VOTE):** Principal Chris Fontaine was present to answer questions the committee had about this trip.

(VOTE) Chair Schlachter entertained a motion to approve the MESMS 7th grade Bronx Zoo field trip.

Kyle Belanger so moved.

Danielle Cooke seconded.

E. Friesner – Aye; Danielle Cooke – Aye; Lynda Pickbourn – Aye; Kyle Belanger – Aye & Allison Schlachter – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

- VIII. School Choice Openings Approval (VOTE):** Mark McLaughlin shared that the Administration team discussed how the process worked last year, school enrollment and what the district could bear to sustain school choice without additional hires and the decision to not open slots for Plains. He shared the openings per grade available. There was discussion about sibling preference, slots filled last year and Plains population.

(VOTE) Chair Schlachter entertained a motion to approve the school choice openings as presented tonight.

Danielle Cooke so moved.

Kyle Belanger seconded.

E. Friesner – Aye; Danielle Cooke – Aye; Lynda Pickbourn – Aye; Kyle Belanger – Aye & Allison Schlachter – Aye.

This motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

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- IX. Information Only: NONE
- X. Unfinished Business: NONE
- XI. New Business: NONE

(VOTE) Chair Schlachter entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Kyle Belanger so moved.

Lynda Pickbourn seconded.

E. Friesner – Aye; Danielle Cooke – Aye; Lynda Pickbourn – Aye; Kyle Belanger – Aye & Allison Schlachter – Aye.

Meeting adjourned at 8:38pm

Respectfully submitted, Kiesha Keitt, Executive Assistant, South Hadley Public Schools.

Reviewed and Approved by the South Hadley School Committee

Date: