

South Hadley Public Schools Special School Committee Meeting Minutes

October 28, 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 Special Meeting of the South Hadley School Committee to order at 6:02 p.m.

Present: Dr. Jahmal Mosley, Superintendent of Schools
Allison Schlachter, Chairperson
Allyson Garcia, Assistant Chairperson
Jennifer Matos, Voting Member
Danielle Cooke, Voting Member
Kaily Godek, Student Representative

Absent: Jennifer Voyik, Business Manager
Mark McLaughlin, Assistant Superintendent of Schools

Guests: Eric Friesner, New School Committee Member
Liz Lafonde, MASC Representative

II. Public Comment

Laura Evans was promoted to panel to speak. She noticed that the agenda was voting on the calendar. She wanted to know how many days can be missed? Also, wanted to know if other options than Saturdays and February vacation were discussed. She admits that she has not watched any recent meetings.

Dr. Mosley responded that we have to make up the days by State law. The make up days available are weekends and vacations. It was not an easy decision, but in collaboration with the Union they came to the hard decision of a combination of weekends and vacation days. Chairperson Schlachter agreed that we looked at every angle with all of the people that are involved in the planning something this complicated. This was our only solution.

No further comments.

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III. **New School Committee Member**

Chairperson Schlachter announced that Eric Friesner has been appointed to our committee through a unanimous vote during the joint meeting with the Select Board and the School Committee. He is not officially a school committee member, yet. The town clerk is on vacation. On Monday, Mr. Friesner will be sworn in as a school committee member. For all intents and purposes, Eric Friesner will be able to attend the meeting this evening, however, he will not be able to vote on anything tonight.

Jen Matos asked where Mr. Friesner would come in during the roll call vote. Chairperson Schlachter responded that it would be after Jen Matos and before the Chair. She further stated that once he is fully on the committee next Thursday, we will have to reorganize our subcommittees. Because the subcommittees that Charles was on, which were quite a few, will have to be filled. There was a mention that some members would like to give up some subcommittees and get on others. The option was placed on their radars. Allyson Garcia mentioned that she would like to be removed from Negotiating Committee and interested in the Joint Labor Management Committee. Chair stated that they will have a conversation next Thursday.

IV. **2021-2022 School Calendar Changes for High School (Vote)**

Chairperson Schlachter referred to Dr. Jahmal Mosley with regards to the calendar. Dr. Mosley stated that the calendar had to be updated to reflect the make-up days. There are ten (10) days listed. His intent and his hope are that he can add one more day to the back end sometime in June. He hopes that there's no snow days during these make up days, which can throw us off. There's a strong possibility it may snow on Saturday and no one thinks about those things.

Also, the Union did point out that the high school had professional development days on September 1 and September 27 to prepare for remote learning, which eliminated the April 12 professional development for the high school.

Chairperson Allison Schlachter referred to Danielle Cooke (calendar guru) to review the calendar for edits. Ms. Cooke stated that she didn't see anything glaring out. She did state that a comment that she has heard is why can't we extend the half days. She further states that it has to do with physical days. The half days are already counted as a physical day. You can't add something that's already existing. She hopes that is clear for everyone.

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Dr. Mosley states it's very complicated. We compensate teachers for 183 days depending on the professional development. The day of the compensation is really based on 180 days. There's some discussion around half days vs. full days. What qualifies for a "full day"? He would like us to be careful of a couple of things. This is exclusively for the high school and not for K through 8. That must be considered. The second thing is we don't want to make any assumptions at this point of what's a half day, what's a full day. Also, Liz Wood and I submitted our high school schedule and our calendar to DESE and will resend it once this has approval. If we want to make that consideration, we would be in line with, and those days would count.

We don't want to schedule half days and find out that they don't qualify for full days. Then people are really going to get mad. Then students will go to school on Saturdays, thinking that a half day is counted as a full day; and DESE can say that doesn't count. Then you will have to go back another full day to make up that day. He doesn't want to move or make assumptions until we get clear understanding and guidance from DESE. The other piece is if we make half days for the high school, then what does that look like for the elementary and the middle school that actually worked full days. So that has to be considered as well. Dr. Mosley and Chairperson have reviewed this 100 times and wanted to confirm that everyone understood. No response.

Once you go through the teacher contracts and understand how they align, you really get into the 180 days, really means something and that goes for every single level. What this mold has done is set one 180 days, K through 8; and another 180 days K through 8, and now they're not aligned in the days and in the hours. Typically, a half day is for the whole district, so everyone gets half day. Now, if we were to consider that that would be specifically for the high school. What about the K through 8? That would have to be negotiated, number one and number two, what days are the half days. So that's why we keep them full for now until we can work all of that out. Or not work it out and keep it as is. It's cleaner and simpler.

Chairperson Schlachter confirms if there are any questions. Danielle Cooke responds that she is glad that we discussed that a little further out in the open so that everyone can start making sense of it, too. Chairperson stated that she had not heard the one that people wanted to add a half day to an already scheduled half day. Ms. Cooke stated that a couple of people had asked her about the testing days for the high school in the winter, mid-terms, or something like that... Those are half days and why can't they be full days. The Chair stated that was new to her. She heard of wanting a half-day on Saturdays and wanting the additional days to be half days, but that would be a full day. Kailey Godek confirms that a lot of students to make the half days, full days. But when mid-terms come around, no one sticks around after mid-terms. Everyone just tends to get a note and leave; and have excused absences in the afternoon. It's typically the star-studded students that stay or people who can't get rides home.

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Chairperson Schlachter understands that thinking. People have very good ideas and are creative; and genuinely want to solve these problems. Then it just gets complicated by all of the pieces to the puzzle. There are lots of different people looking at the same problem from the different angles. And it means different things to different people. So, the difficult job of the Superintendent and his staff and the School Committee is to consider all of those angles. Then find the one solution, sort of the Venn Diagram, that fits for everyone. That doesn't always make everyone happy, but there has been great effort to do everything possible that we can do to get this where we need to get it. My heart goes out to everyone that has to go to school on Saturday, but we just have to do it and put it behind us and move through it.

Chairperson asks if there are any further questions. Danielle Cooke asked on the key where it states "Drop 5 / Drop 7" that's just the high school day schedule, right? Dr. Mosley confirms.

Chairperson Schlachter entertains a motion to accept the changes to the 2021-2022 School Calendar for the high school. Dr. Matos moves the motion; second by Danielle Cooke. No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously: 4/0 (Garcia, Cooke, Matos, Schlachter)

V. MASC Training on "Superintendent Evaluation Best Practices"

Chairperson Schlachter introduced Ms. Liz Lafond, the MASC representative. Ms. Lafond admits that she doesn't know most of the School Committee members. All committee members and superintendent introduce themselves. Ms. Lafond stated that a number of school committees are working on handbooks. So, when there's a lot of turnover on a committee, there's sort of an artifact to hand over to the next person. This is kind of how it works, and this is why... When you're not too busy in the future, you may want to take on something like that. The Chair states that she believe Ms. Lafond helped the committee write a handbook about a decade ago or was that a policy book. Ms. Lafond confirmed it was a policy book. Ms. Lafond says it shorter than a policy. It's approximately 6-10 pages with some of the governing policies and protocols. Chair stated maybe in the next cycle in April or May, we can be add that as a subcommittee.

Ms. Lafond shared her screen and informed them that her slides are slightly different due to a formatting issue. She stated that it would be a high level overview, but expects questions from Chairperson Schlachter in the future. They will help you whenever you have a problem or come across matters that you need some specific answers. She asked the committee, "What do you view as the primary reason for evaluating the superintendent?" No wrong answers, but how you view the evaluation could affect your individual evaluations of the superintendent.

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Allyson Garcia had a question about how the overall evaluation will impact your individual evaluation. Ms. Lafond informed her that it's how you view the evaluation process could have an effect on your individual evaluation. Since this group has not had an evaluation before, this is a good overview with your superintendent in mind so you can move forward and have these discussions about the "how" and the "where" and the "what". Chairperson Schlachter stated that why we evaluate anyone. If there is a mission or goals and we want to make sure the people working for us in any capacity are staying in line with that mission or goals. Evaluating and monitoring their progress toward those goals.

Ms. Lafond reviewed the following evaluation areas with School Committee and Superintendent.

Three Key Components

1. Five Step Cycle
2. Two Part Tool
 - a. Goals and Standards used to measure accomplishment
3. Multi-Part Rating System

The 5-Step Cycle

1. Begins with a Self-Assessment by the Superintendent
2. Goal-Setting and Implementation Plan Development
3. Implementation
4. Mid-Cycle Review
5. Final Evaluation

TWO PART TOOL

SMART Goals

- Professional Practice
- Student Learning
- 2-4 District Improvement Goals

DESE Standards

- Instructional Leadership
- Management and Operations
- Family and Community Engagement
- Professional Culture

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Specific

Measurable

Attainable

Rigorous, Realistic, Results Oriented

Time-bound, Tracked

SMART Goals have key actions and benchmarks to measure progress

District Goals are the Foundation for the Work in the School District

- District goals drive the goals of school improvement plans, administrator and teacher goals.
- School Committee goals support the Superintendent's and District's goals.

Standard I: Instructional Leadership

Standards / Indicators / Descriptors

- The education leader promotes learning and growth of all students and the success of all staff by cultivating a shared vision that makes powerful teaching and learning the central focus of schooling

Indicator 1-A: Curriculum

- Ensures that all staff design effective and rigorous standards-based units of instruction consisting of well-structured lessons with measurable outcomes.

Create Evaluation Document

- Superintendent will draft goals
- School Committee and Superintendent work to identify Standards and Indicators that will measure goal accomplishment
- School Committee and Superintendent discuss artifacts of evidence
- School Committee and Superintendent create year-long agenda

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RATING SYSTEM

Rating on Goals

- Exceeded
- Met
- Significant Progress
- Some Progress
- Did Not Meet

Rating on Standards

- Exemplary
- Proficient
- Needs Improvement
- Unsatisfactory

Summative Rating

- Exemplary
- Proficient
- Needs Improvement
- Unsatisfactory

WHAT IS REQUIRED AND WHAT IS OPTIONAL?

Required

- Four (4) SMART Goals in three (3) areas
- Rating on all four (4) standards
- Overall Summative Rating

Optional

- You do not need to use all Indicators
- Weighing of Standards
- Timing of Cycle and Participation
- How Evaluation is Used
- Process for Completing

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TIMING OF THE CYCLE

What Makes the Most Sense in Terms of Planning and District Work?

- Election time considerations
- Who prepares individual evaluations?
- When are they prepared by outgoing members?
- What about newly elected members?
- Who votes?

DESE Resources

- ✓ Implementation Guidance
- ✓ Rubrics
- ✓ Five Part Video Series:
 - Making the Most of the Opportunity
 - Organizing the Process
 - Putting Goals at the Center
 - Assessing Progress and Performance
 - Deciding and Reporting Ratings

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/resources/evaluation/default.html>

Kaily Godek briefly discussed the high school raffle calendars and the prizes available, which cost \$10 each.

Chairperson states with no further business to discuss, there was a roll call vote passed unanimously (Garcia, Cook, Matos and Proctor). The Special School Committee Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.