

MINUTES OF THE HINGHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

May 22, 2017

1. Call to order.

The meeting was called to order by School Committee Chair Liza O'Reilly at 7:31 p.m.

Members Present: Michelle Ayer, Aylene Calnan, Carlos Da Silva, Cynthia Galko, Liza O'Reilly, Kay Praschma, and Ed Schreier.

Central Office Present: Dorothy Galo, James LaBillois, John Ferris, Elizabeth Kurlan

Visitors Present: Alec Porter, Kevin Quilty, Rick Swanson, Melissa Smith, Charleen Fabrizio, Ted Hirsch, Carol M. Falvey, Brad Patterson, Aisha Oppong, Katherine Gaughen, P. Swanson, K. Swanson, Christine Smith.

2. Approval of Minutes.

2.1 On a motion by Aylene Calnan and seconded by Carlos Da Silva,

It was

Voted: To approve the minutes of the School Committee meeting held on May 8, 2017.

3. Questions and Comments. None**4. Superintendent's Report.**

- Dr. Galo shared a letter from Suzanne Weiss and Ariane Swearingen (HMS French teachers) about the Middle School Quebec Trip. By all accounts it was successful and a positive learning experience for our students.
- Dr. Galo shared the notification that one of our students, Angela White, is a National Merit Scholar and has been given a financial award from the organization.
- Patrick Callahan, a Middle School Physical Education teacher, has been identified as an "Amazing Teacher" by Learner's Edge. Dr. Galo, and the Committee, congratulated Patrick on this accomplishment.
- Dr. Galo updated the Committee relative to kindergarten enrollment and elementary class size projections. Based on enrollment, the district is prepared to have fifteen (15) sections of kindergarten for the 2017-2018 school year. South, Foster, and PRS will all run four sections, while East will run three. Further, elementary class size is looking good and Dr. Galo noted a net reduction of elementary students of 61.

5. Communications

5.1 Communications Received by the Superintendent: Dr. Galo directed the Committee's attention to a letter in the packet regarding the appointment of Mr. Richard Swanson as the next principal of Hingham High School. Mr. Swanson was in attendance and was recognized, and congratulated, by the Committee.

5.2 Student Communications: Brad Patterson was in attendance and updated the Committee on a number of student events. Junior awards night, senior prom, and the last day of school for seniors, senior prom, and graduation were all noted. Brad also notified the Committee of the HHS Century Club dinner, final exams, Senior Awards Night, and the upcoming Singer/Songwriter Showcase. Brad also noted that Dr. Girouard-McCann received a book from students containing over 1,000

notes and cards congratulating her on her retirement and wishing her well in the next phase of her life.

- 5.3 Other Communications: Melissa Smith, principal-elect of PRS, was in attendance and introduced the next Assistant Principal of PRS, Ms. Charleen Fabrizio. Ms. Smith provided a brief review of Ms. Fabrizio's qualifications and experience.

6. New Business

- 6.1 The Committee was introduced to Richard O. Swanson, the High School Principal-Elect. Chair Liza O'Reilly read the following statement about Mr. Swanson:

"Rick, congratulations on your appointment as Principal. I was one of two School Committee representatives on the search committee and had the privilege of participating in the full process, from evaluating all of the resumes received to interviewing the group of candidates who made the next cut. The screening committee recommended three semi-finalists to the Central Office team to interview, and two finalists were chosen. We then made visits to both schools to learn more about the finalists from the people who know them well – department heads, teachers, administrative staff, students, parents and community members. Finally, there were public forums held at Hingham High School to allow the candidates to meet and answer questions from members of the community. I did not personally know Rick Swanson going into this process. My children are part of his assigned students by alphabet but fortunately I never had to meet with him over an issue. I kept a very open mind about all of the candidates throughout the process, but by the end of the forums on May 9th I knew that Rick would be a great choice for both Hingham High School and the Hingham community.

A few things about Rick that struck me as important are:

- The high moral values that he shares through his interactions with everyone he meets. When Rick entered teaching, he chose to go to one of the most challenging inner city middle schools in the country to make a difference in children's lives, and he succeeded where others had failed. The feedback on the Tennoji baseball exchange program was that Rick's focus was on the global, cultural experience, not on baseball. The high school students don't doubt his discipline decisions because they have a relationship with him, he is consistent and fair, and they do not want to disappoint him.
- Rick has a quiet and consistent leadership style that creates communities that follow his lead. During the search process one teacher shared that 10 years ago their assigned committee for the NEASC review process was a disaster, and that they were dreading the process this time around. They were very pleasantly surprised with Rick's performance as chair of their committee this past year, as he kept everyone focused on the task, ran efficient meetings and was respectful of everyone's time. The committee finished its task ahead of schedule and the members were proud of the work they had completed. Rick has also shown impressive leadership with his Green efforts over the years. His work on the Green program began 10 years ago with a few kids doing some basic recycling, and has grown into hundreds of students sorting the trash at lunchtime and 30 students digging dirt and composting at 8:00am each day...a very impressive feat! Rick's leadership in this area was instrumental in positioning Hingham High School to receive the national Green Ribbon Award.
- Rick's passion for the staff, teachers, students and education came through in many of the anecdotes that we heard during the search process. Students commented that their favorite history class was when Rick came in to teach Eisenhower for the day. On the site visit, a wide range of teachers from all subject areas came forward to express their support and respect for him as a colleague and administrator. Finally, the support staff of the school – custodial, secretarial, cafeteria and others – authentically shared stories of how they engage with Rick and how he listens to their suggestions and includes them in decisions.

- Rick, in the community forum on May 9, you said that your vision for Hingham High School is to continue the amazing things (of which there are many), to have more community involvement, and to (I quote), “Make it completely obvious that we are awesome and that everyone feels it when they walk through the front door.” I couldn’t agree more with that vision.

The High School Principal search was a comprehensive process that allowed many people to ask a variety of questions, address a wide range of issues, and think about how Hingham Public Schools fits into the wider Hingham community. I personally found the process to be valuable in that it allowed us to learn about other high schools and how they operate, identify the challenges they face and how those compare to the ones we deal with in Hingham, and learn about new ideas we may want to pursue in the future. Rick, based on all of these factors, I am pleased that you earned this position and I am excited about the future of Hingham High School and the Hingham Public Schools with you as one of our key leaders. Well done.”

Following this statement Mr. Swanson thanked the Committee for the opportunity and noted his excitement to begin planning for the fall.

- 6.2 The Committee received the School Committee Subcommittee and Liaison Assignments. Chair Liza O’Reilly read the newly formed subcommittee assignments for the 2017-2018 school year. She asked that if there are any questions or concerns, to please let her know.
- 6.3 The Committee discussed the 2017 School Building Committee appointment process. Chair Liza O’Reilly noted that she had spoken with Board of Selectmen Chair Mary Power relative to the process of appointing members of the School Building Committee. Ms. O’Reilly was asked to share a list of the skills and talent needed on the Committee that needs to be recruited with the Selectmen and Town Moderator. The talent bank application is on the Town Website and will be posted on the School Website for individuals interested in serving on the Committee to complete.
- 6.4 The Committee discussed potential changes to the building use and bus rental fee scales. Director of Business and Support Services John Ferris noted that it has been several years since the district has examined the facilities rental matrix and the amount that is charged to various groups. Mr. Ferris requested that the Policy Subcommittee examine the current rate structure and make a recommendation for a nominal increase.
- 6.5 The Committee discussed potential dates for summer and early fall School Committee meetings. Chair Liza O’Reilly reviewed several planned meetings that needed dates to be booked. Following discussion, the Committee booked all meetings needed.
- 6.6 The Committee received notification of the appointment of Laura Patnaude, Night Custodian at HMS and PRS, effective May 15, 2017.

7. Other items as may not reasonably be known 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

Dr. Galo noted two items. First, the Board of Directors of the South Shore Educational Collaborative met on May 19, 2017 and the report to the Board is included in the packet. Further, Mr. Ferris updated the Committee on his MASBO conference and the partial roof replacement bids for Hingham High School.

8. Subcommittee and Project Reports

Ed Schreier reminded the Committee that the SNAP fundraiser is scheduled for June 9, 2017 at the South Shore Country Club. He also noted that the Hingham Rotary Club is hosting a golf fundraiser scheduled for June 19, 2017 with all proceeds going to benefit the SNAP summer program.

9. Motion to Move to Executive Session.

On a motion by Aylene Calnan and seconded by Cynthia Galko,

It was

Voted: To move to executive session, not to return to open session, for the purpose of discussing strategies with respect to matters related to 1) the collective bargaining agreement with HEA, Unit A and 2) bargaining with non-union personnel, the public discussion of which may be detrimental to the Committee's bargaining position.

Respectfully Submitted by:
Cynthia Galko