

Regular Meeting
October 21, 2009
Hollis-Brookline Middle School

Janice Tremblay, Chairperson
Tom Enright
Fred Hubert
James O'Shea, MD
Dan Peterson
Steve Simons
Tom Solon

Susan Hodgdon, Superintendent of Schools
Tim Kelley, Principal, Hollis-Brookline High School
Pat Goyette, Principal, Hollis-Brookline Middle School
Doug Smith, Interim Business Administrator
Carol Mace, Director of Curriculum
Robert Kelly, Director of Special Education
Emily Davis, Student Representative
Betsy A. Packard, Recording Secretary

Others present included members of the Public.

Chairperson Janice Tremblay called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

1. AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

None.

2. PUBLIC INPUT

Phil Bowers, Brookline, addressed the Board regarding bus transportation. Mr. Bowers questioned the Board as to what is allowed to be carried on the bus and what is not. He stated that the bus driver told his son that he was not allowed to bring his musical instruments on the bus. The rule has caused his son having to be driven to school each day. Mr. Bowers stated that he had emailed Supt. Hodgdon a few times with his concern that the rules were not being administered fairly, as other students carry large sports bags onto the bus. He added that the State law states that that items cannot be stored in the aisle, and must be stored securely. Mr. Bowers asked if the rule was an Orde Transportation rule or a school rule.

Supt. Hodgdon responded that she had met with Nancy Orde over the last couple of weeks regarding the reduction of buses. She stated that she had been told that the State Safety Regulations state that nothing may be placed in front of the emergency door. Students must be able to hold items on their laps, so that there are no flying objects if the bus stops abruptly. Supt. Hodgdon added that by reducing the number of buses will help out the bottom line, but it may also restrict some students' use of buses.

Mr. Hubert asked if the school provided storage at the school so students do not have to transport musical instruments on a daily basis. Ms. Goyette responded that she had been in contact with Mr. Secor and Mr. Bowers in regards to trying to problem-solve the issue of parents having to drive their students.

Mr. Bowers questioned why his son seemed to have this problem when no one else seemed to. Other students are bringing instruments and large athletic bags on the bus. He felt that his son was being discriminated against because his bus was full.

Mr. Solon stated that he was not sure that there was a set policy, and if there was one, how well defined it was. He felt there was a need to establish what the policy is and make sure that it is uniformly imposed with the least restriction possible.

Mr. Bowers added that two other buses go by his house, thus he felt there were other options. Supt. Hodgdon stated that she did not know what the bus assignments will look like once they start juggling. All buses could be full. She added that the practice of allowing students to carry instruments/bags that can be held on their lap should be uniformly enforced.

3. AUDIT OF FY09 BUDGET

Chair. Tremblay read the following statement:

The audit of financial activities and statements for FY09 was completed and the auditors have issued their findings. Generally, the report was favorable with only two suggestions for change. One suggestion concerned the federal grant activity and a recommendation that the dollars be recorded in their own fund. Currently, we maintain a "Grants Fund," and monies in that account are from a variety of sources (including federal funds). The other concerned a need for improving documentation and timeliness of transactions related to the student activities funds.

4. REPORTS

Business Administrator

Doug Smith reported that he and Ms. Duhamel have emailed each other regarding negotiations. He has been focused on negotiations. He will now start on budgets. He asked the Board for guidance for the kind of reports they wanted.

Mr. Peterson stated that a question came up at the Budget Committee meeting regarding the unreserved fund balance '09. He explained that they had budgeted \$25,000 for Project Progress. It is likely that it will not be spent, so the question was where that money will go. Supt. Hodgdon stated that according to Ms. Duhamel, the money is available for spending for Project Progress throughout the year. If it is not used, then it needs to go back to the unreserved fund balance.

Mr. Simons stated that the reports that the Board had been getting previously were adequate; therefore, Mr. Smith could simply continue with the same. Mr. Enright added that he would like a 4-month report in November, and would like to see monthly reports towards the end of the year. Mr. Peterson stated that they had talked about quarterly reports. Mr. Enright felt that that would be good.

Buildings and Grounds Supervisor

Mr. Kelley reported that Hollis Construction has tried to address the water puddling at the end of Cavalier Court and Rte. 122. Mr. Kelley added that the cost of the project (\$1550) was paid with funds from the parking permit fees.

Principal – High School

Mr. Kelley distributed copies of the High School Profile, which goes out with every college application.

Mr. Kelley reported that Guidance Counselor Sandra Bent registered the High School in the Rensselaer Medal Program. The award is given to a student at the end of their junior year. If the medalist is accepted and attends RPI, then he/she will be offered a \$15,000 per year scholarship for four years.

Mr. Kelley stated that there were several field trips that needed the Board's approval:

- ~ France – April 23 – May 1. There will be a maximum of 27 students with 2 French teachers from the High School as well as community chaperones.
- ~ New York City – May 15 – 16. Will be visiting the United Nations.
- ~ New York City – The High School Chorus will be performing at the Lincoln Center in May.
- ~ New York City – December 5 – 6. American Studies Class.

Mr. Simons asked if all the conditions of the Field Trip Policy will be adhered to. Mr. Kelley responded that they would be.

Steve Simons moved that the Board approve the field trip to France and the three field trips to New York City. Tom Enright seconded.

Mr. Solon asked if there was **any** financial assistance for students who would like to go, but did not have the funds. Mr. Kelley explained that the school does not provide scholarships for field trips unless it is a mandatory trip. He added that the students going on the field trip to Lincoln Center will be doing fundraisers.

Motion carried unanimously. 7 – 0 – 0.

Mr. Peterson asked for a report on the playing fields. Mr. Kelley reported that Bentley Construction from Hollis did some preliminary work on the lacrosse field to verify the location and depth of ledge. It is proposed that the lacrosse field be extended to make it suitable for football. There will be an additional practice field on top. Bleachers and coaches' box will be built into the side of the hill. The cost is \$20,000. Funds from the gate fees will cover the costs. They are looking into a couple more bids. The plan is to move quickly so the field will be ready for next fall.

Mr. Peterson asked that they be sure that they think about everything they want to do for the field – bleachers, coaches' box, scoreboard, infrastructure for lights, so that they will not have to add things at a later date, which will be more costly.

Mr. Simons asked if they are using a professional for planning the field. Mr. Kelley stated that he would like another set of eyes to make sure they are not missing anything. He asked that Mr. Simons and Mr. Peterson be involved in the project. Chair Tremblay stated that she too would like to be involved in the proposal/contract part of the project. She pointed out that if a project is over \$25,000 they must have a bond. She felt that if they added any other things to the project, it would surpass the \$25,000 mark.

Mr. Enright asked that they be sure to look at the septic tank near the volleyball court and the leach field by the practice field. Mr. Kelley stated that Mr. Rupp had talked to Hutter Construction.

Dr. O'Shea asked that in regards to the tragedy that took place in Mt. Vernon, if Mr. Kelley and the faculty had all the resources they needed. Mr. Kelley responded that letters had been sent home, which resulted in many calls. Students that need help have been identified. Last night, a healing session was held at the Brookline Church. Mr. Kelley added that some students are processing the incident through Facebook, which he did not recommend. Mr. Kelley felt that students needed to process this through their parents, families and/or teachers. He added that they have a lot of resources to begin to address the situation. He pointed out that he also has a staff that is hurting, but is also holding together.

Dr. O'Shea asked how a parent or student would confidentially contact staff for help. Mr. Kelley responded that the Guidance Department is the first line they should go through. The Guidance Department knows who to refer the person to.

Student Board Representative

Ms. Davis reported that Homecoming went well.

Ms. Davis stated that recently, SaLT group leaders met with freshmen and some sophomores for an event, in which they viewed the movie "Pay It Forward," then discussed the themes and message of the movie. She added that she hoped SaLT would continue into next year.

Principal – Middle School

Ms. Goyette reported the Sheila Mandragouras, School Nurse, has been doing excellent with flu-like symptoms. There is a focus on prevention, providing hand sanitizers, and wipes for teachers.

Ms. Goyette stated that they had a field trip scheduled for that day, and they decided not to cancel it. They will make such decisions day to day. Parents have been great, especially in sharing their child's symptoms with the school.

Ms. Goyette reported that the recycling club has changed their name to "Trash Talkers." The club made a recommendation that the school turn the lights off for 15 minutes each day in an effort to conserve. It was decided to turn lights off at 2:00 p.m. (does not include inside classrooms). Many classrooms do not turn them back on after the 15 minutes. Also, each teacher received in a recycled bag a cookie that had "2:00 pm" on it as a reminder.

Mr. Enright asked who turns the lights on at 5:30 a.m., as he often sees them on. Ms. Goyette stated that she would find out.

Mr. Kelley informed the Board that yesterday the PTSA served the staff an appreciation breakfast for what they have had to deal with the past week.

Chair. Tremblay asked about the hand sanitizers. Mr. Kelley responded that there are hand sanitizers around the school. The school nurse felt that what they are currently doing is effective. Ms. Goyette stated that hand washing is the first choice at the Middle School, with hand sanitizers being used if sneeze/cough into hands and cannot readily get to a sink.

Network Administrator

Chair. Tremblay advised the Board to send any questions they may have regarding the Network Administrator's report to Rich Raymond.

Director of Special Education

Mr. Kelly informed the Board that in the FY10 Revenue report, an asterisk for a footnote was left off. It referenced CAT Aid received in January.

Mr. Kelly reported the following issues:

- Dept. of Revenue – not sure they can fully fund 80% until all districts have reported in.
- This is a forecast, prior to State Dept. reviewing all allowable costs.

Superintendent

Supt. Hodgdon informed the Board that she had received correspondence from a parent who asked to have a letter that had been sent to the Telegraph, but had not been published, and regarded the High School and Mr. Cieto, be read at the Board meeting. Supt. Hodgdon then read the letter.

Supt. Hodgdon reported that in regards to the Business Administrator search, they were in negotiations with Mark McLaughlin.

Staffing –

Supt. Hodgdon informed the Board that Sara Campbell, has been designated the long-term substitute for Gina Bergskaug in Chemistry. She attended William & Mary and has a PhD in Material Chemistry from Dartmouth. Ms. Campbell will receive 10 days of substitute pay, then receive a per diem of \$231.00 based on M+30 Step 1.

Mr. Solon asked if she had her State Certificate. Supt. Hodgdon responded that she did.

Mr. Kelley reported that the maternity leave for Ms. Bergskaug would be December to January, and expected the request to come next month.

Budget Committee Representative

Mr. Peterson reported that a Budget Committee meeting was held on Monday. The Budget Committee would like to request the following:

- The date of the Budget Hearing (not yet finalized)
- Student population (Supt. Hodgdon is verifying the information)
- Mr. Kelly's presence at a meeting for Special Education
- The Budget Committee's presence at the first School Board budget meeting (next month)

Mr. Peterson stated that the Budget Committee voted on the following guidance at it's Monday meeting:

- Maintain the exact same budget as this year as the maximum, including contracts.
- Target is -3%.
- \$18,352,000 – includes contracts and Special Education

Mr. Peterson added that the Budget Committee feels that there are still cost savings that have not been implemented.

Mr. Enright responded that the Budget Committee's guidance was not his target. He would like to see it as a starting point. He would like to see no increase except for contracts. He added that he would need to see the budget first, but he felt that -3% would mean reducing personnel. He stated he would like 0% for now.

Mr. Peterson stated that he told the Budget Committee that the Board needs to take the budget and scrub it, and try to reduce it without compromising the integrity of programs. Until the Board look at the budget they cannot provide guidance. As far a negotiations, the Board must go in with good faith with what's fair for the staff and the taxpayers.

Other – Board Chair

Chair. Tremblay informed the Board that there was a correction to information that was given out last month. She read the following statement:

At our September 16, 2009 meeting, I announced that we were updating software for the SAU web site and that we would be posting the agenda and written reports for our meetings in the near future. I stand corrected. We will continue to post the agenda for upcoming meetings at the high school, middle school, and SAU office. Members of the Coop Board will receive the agenda and related reports or documents electronically from the SAU office. Any member of the public who wishes to receive an electronic copy of the agenda and/or the

related reports can submit a request to Doris Lindgren at the SAU office. Her e-mail address is lindgrend@SAU41.K12.nh.us.

Minutes of meetings will be posted to the web site after approval at a subsequent board meeting.

Miscellaneous

Mr. Enright asked Mr. Kelley to respond to the issue of the audits. Mr. Kelley stated that the auditors found that the school was not making enough deposits during the week. They will now make deposits (monies from weekend events) on Monday so there will not be a significant amount of money in the safe.

5. POLICIES

Steve Simons moved to amend Policy IIA – Instructional and Library Media Material by adding a new Paragraph 3 on page 8 under APPENDIX – Library/Media Use of AV Media. The subsequent numbers will be revised. The new paragraph should read:

In the Middle School and High School, media with a rating of G, PG, or PG13 will be allowed. In the High School, media with an R rating will require permission.

In addition, on page 2, V. B. “maturiy” will be changed to “maturity.”

Tom Enright seconded.

Mr. Solon questioned if the Middle School should be included in the policy since unrated materials are not shown. Ms. Goyette responded that unrated materials are never shown at the Middle School and that they do not use documentaries at this point. She added that she did not have a problem with the Middle School being included in the policy.

Steve Simons moved to amend the last sentence of the amendment to read:

In addition, media that is unrated and potentially objectionable will require permission.

Tom Enright seconded.

Motion to amend the wording of the last sentence carried unanimously. 7 – 0 – 0.

Motion to amend the policy carried. 6 – 1 – 0. (O’Shea against.)

6. TRANSPORTATION

Supt. Hodgdon stated that they had discussed the issue of families wanting students to be allowed to transport bulky items. She added that once the decision of keeping, changing, or eliminating routes has been made, she will have a discussion with the transportation company about uniformity of rules throughout the buses.

Issues to be considered for the elimination of buses:

- Bulky items such as band instruments, athletic equipment, school projects.
- Students living at different residences during the week causing them to have to switch buses.
- Per policy, students can only ride a bus for 45 minutes.
- Buses having to get back to pick up elementary students.

- Changing the time that the buses leave the barn, currently 6:30 a.m. , would change to 6:19 a.m.
- Time needed to let parents know about the proposal – implement new bus route Monday, November 2.

Mr. Enright stated that they had discussed 2 students vs. 3 students to a seat. He questioned how the elimination of a bus would impact the number of riders on other buses. Supt. Hodgdon responded that some buses would have 3 to a seat.

Mr. Peterson suggested that they proceed with collecting actual data until the end of December, adding that he wanted to see actual ridership numbers.

Ms. Goyette felt that they should look at the numbers before the new sports season started, during the sports season, and after the sports season, as the number of students riding the buses change.

Supt. Hodgdon reminded the Board that they had been looking at a bus pass system. She stated that they needed to make a decision that night. Mr. Peterson did not feel that they needed passes, as that was suggested in order to get ridership numbers. Mr. Kelley suggested that they ask the bus drivers to use “clickers” to get a head count on their buses. Supt. Hodgdon agreed with the suggestion.

Mr. Enright felt it was reasonable that students should be able to bring on the bus what they needed for school.

Chair. Tremblay stated that the Brookline buses might need to leave the bus barn earlier, and wondered if that was the same for Hollis. Supt. Hodgdon responded that the Hollis would not have to leave earlier, as their routes are not as long.

Steve Simons moved that the Board instruct the bus company to eliminate two buses, to take data over the next couple of months, and to report back with actual data and how the changes are going. Tom Enright seconded. Motion carried unanimously. 7 – 0 – 0.

Chair. Tremblay asked the Board what they wanted to do about bus passes.

Dr. James O’Shea moved that the Board table the pursuit of bus passes. Tom Enright seconded. Motion carried. 6 – 0 – 1. (Hubert abstained.)

Mr. Enright thanked Supt. Hodgdon and the Ordes for all the work they had done and Mr. Bowers for his comments.

Mr. Bowers commented that he was looking at the bottom line of the discriminatory issue of some students being able to take large objects on the bus and others not being allowed.

Chair. Tremblay asked that Supt. Hodgdon, the Ordes, and Mr. Bowers work together to get a resolution by November 2nd.

7. MINUTES

Steve Simons moved that the Board approve the minutes of September 16, 2009. Tom Enright seconded.

Ms. Goyette stated that on page 3, Middle School report, second paragraph, “last January” should be changed to “last June.”

Motion carried unanimously as corrected. 7 – 0 – 0.

Steve Simons moved that the meeting adjourn. Tom Enright seconded. Motion carried unanimously. 7 – 0 – 0.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.