



**HOLLISTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
HOLLISTON, MA 01746**

**School Committee Meeting  
June 18, 2020**

Present: Mrs. Raffi (Chair); Ms. Hanstad (Vice Chair); Ms. Kocian; Mrs. Listewnik; Mr. Morton; Ms. Neborsky; Ms. Shaughnessy; Dr. Jackson, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Botelho, Assistant Superintendent; Mr. Buday, Business Manager

Absent:

**Call to Order**

Mrs. Raffi called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. She then read the following statement aloud:

“Pursuant to the Governor’s Order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, Massachusetts General Law Chapter 30A, paragraph 20, as well as the Select Board’s Emergency Order dated March 16, 2020, the Holliston School Committee will be using remote participation for this meeting. The audio of this meeting is being recorded and will be posted to the HCAT webpage within 24 hours in accordance with the Governor’s Emergency Action Requirement of keeping the public informed of actions during this meeting. I would ask that all participants remotely attending this meeting please state your name for identification purposes each time you speak throughout the meeting.

At this time, a roll call attendance will be taken.”

Roll Call: Ms. Hanstad, present; Mrs. Listewnik, present; Mr. Morton, present; Ms. Shaughnessy, present; Ms. Neborsky, present; Ms. Kocian, present; Mrs. Raffi, present.

On a motion by Ms. Neborsky, seconded by Mrs. Listewnik, The Committee voted to utilize remote participation for the meeting.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Hanstad, yes; Mrs. Listewnik, yes; Mr. Morton, yes; Ms. Shaughnessy, yes; Ms. Neborsky, yes; Ms. Kocian, yes; Mrs. Raffi, yes.

Vote: Favor: 7      Oppose: 0      Abstain: 0      Absent: 0

**Approval of Minutes**

On a motion made by Mrs. Listewnik and seconded by Ms. Shaughnessy, the Committee voted to accept the minutes of the May 21, 2020, Regular Session as presented.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Hanstad, yes; Mrs. Listewnik, yes; Mr. Morton, yes; Ms. Shaughnessy, yes; Ms. Neborsky, yes; Ms. Kocian, yes; Mrs. Raffi, yes.

Vote: Favor: 7      Oppose: 0      Abstain: 0      Absent: 0

Mrs. Raffi then recommended that the May 28, 2020, regular session minutes be reviewed and approved at the next meeting. The Committee agreed.

### **School Committee Individual Comments**

Mrs. Listewnik noted that today was the last day of school and wished everyone a good summer.

Mr. Morton stated he was very impressed with how smoothly the materials pickups went at Miller and Placentino. He also stated he attended the sendoffs for both Miller and Placentino students and thanked the teachers for their efforts during this very unusual school year.

Ms. Shaughnessy thanked Mr. Keim and the Miller School for the end of school year dance video. She then stated that, should she not be re-elected, it has been a privilege serving with the Committee over the years.

Ms. Neborsky thanked all of the educators and administrators for getting us through a difficult year. She especially thanked Mrs. Peters for her efforts on the 5<sup>th</sup> grade Moving Up ceremony. She also commented that she attended the Holliston High School Awards ceremonies.

Ms. Kocian also thanked the teachers and administrators for their efforts. She then reported that the Special Education Parents Advisory Council (SEPAC) had new leadership this year, and they are working on a new website.

Mrs. Raffi thanked the administration and staff for their efforts this school year and thanked the Committee for their support, saying that it has been a privilege to serve with them.

Mrs. Raffi then congratulated the Miller Elementary School on receiving the Safe Routes to School Honorable Mention Award, which they received this week. She offered special thanks to Select Board member Tina Hein, Chief Stone, and School Resource Officers Woods and DiGiorgio, who worked with the PTO to train the parents who did the “Walking School Bus.”

Mrs. Raffi then congratulated and thanked the following people who are retiring from the Holliston Public Schools this year:

- Carlene McGorty, Placentino Preschool Teacher
- Cindy Spino, Miller 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher
- Eileen Harvey, Miller School Student Services Administrator
- Laurie O’Rourke, Adams School 6<sup>th</sup> Grade English Teacher
- Karen Blackney, High School Math Teacher

### **Central Office Administrators’ Comments**

Dr. Jackson thanked the community and especially the employees of the Holliston Public Schools, who worked through the EEE epidemic in the fall and now the COVID-19 pandemic. He thanked everyone associated with the Holliston Public Schools for their flexibility and hard work.

Dr. Botelho echoed Dr. Jackson’s sentiments and thanked everyone, including the students and the parents for their hard work during this extraordinary time.

Dr. Botelho then noted that a district survey went out today asking for feedback regarding the remote learning. He encouraged all parents to respond to the survey, citing that we will use the feedback to help guide instruction in the fall, regardless of what the return to school may look like.

Mr. Buday reported that the free lunch program will be continuing on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays through the end of June. It will be re-evaluated at that time to determine whether there is still need.

Ms. Hanstad expressed her gratitude to the educators, coaches and administration for their guidance and influence over the years, as her last child graduates this year.

### **Opportunity for the Community to Address the School Committee**

Frank Sobchak of 815 Highland Street commented on the need for better communication, as well as speaking against a “one size fits all” approach for reopening in the fall.

Kristin Stoetzel thanked the administration for their prompt response to a request for an updated summer reading list for Miller and Placentino. She mentioned that the Adams list went out this week and is very current and diverse. She then requested an increased budget for the purchase of diverse books for the district.

Ann Marie Dorning of 9 Timber Ledge Drive requested that the School Committee reconsider the policy of pass/fail for the remote classes, especially for juniors.

Alicia Thomas of 468 Central Street spoke about the lack of multicultural education in our schools, and she recommended the forming of a Multicultural Education Task Force.

### **Personnel – Final Meeting-Mrs. Camire**

Mrs. Raffi referenced a paraprofessional professional development session she attended yesterday which was spearheaded by Mrs. Camire. Paraprofessionals recently received professional development in the following areas:

- Social Thinking
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication
- Hearing Impairments and Audiology
- Life Threatening Allergies
- Seizure Training
- “Let’s Dip Our Toes into Cultural Proficiency”
- Confidentiality
- Personal and Protective Equipment
- School Refusal
- Google Works, including Google Calendar/Google Drive
- Gender Identity
- Growth Mindset
- Mindfulness
- How to Collect Data
- Safe and Supportive Schools
- Playground Triage
- Trauma-Sensitive Strategies
- Understanding Challenging Behavior
- Coping Strategies
- Understanding Psychological Testing
- Executive Functioning
- Vaping 101
- Occupational Therapy Strategies
- Understanding Different Types of Mental Health Diagnoses
- Supporting Students with Reading and Math Disabilities
- Acceptance and Commitment Therapy

- Diabetes
- Students with Visual Impairments

Committee members, administrators, and several invited faculty members then expressed their gratitude to Mrs. Camire for her years of service to the students, families and educators of the Holliston Public Schools.

Mrs. Raffi then invited senior administrators, school principals, School Committee members, several faculty members, and several Community members to offer words of thanks to Dr. Jackson for his 16 years of service to the Holliston Public Schools, including Fire Chief Mike Cassidy, Select Board member Tina Hein, MindShare member Barbara Ryan, PTO member Sarah Fitzgerald, former School Committee member Erica Plunkett, HFT President Jaime Cutone, Nurse Leader Lynne Bowler, and Saghi Saadi from Diverse Holliston.

Dr. Jackson then thanked the Committee, the administration, and the community for their support over the last 16 years.

#### **Reports from Building Principals – End of Year Wrap-Up**

Placentino Principal Dr. Jaime Slaney spoke about the accomplishments centered around remote learning, thanking the educators for rising to these new challenges and doing whatever it takes to educate our students during the pandemic.

David Keim, Principal of Miller Elementary School, spoke regarding the rituals they have tried to keep constant at Miller School during the pandemic, like the Moving Up Ceremony and the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Variety Show. There was also the annual luncheon to recognize the retirees, which was held remotely. Mr. Keim also encouraged everyone to spend this summer enjoying their families and “taking a breath.”

Adams Middle School Principal David Jordan commended the teachers for the remote learning that the teachers put together in a short amount of time, with limited resources. He expressed pride in our paraprofessionals for their willing to step in wherever needed.

Mr. Jordan then noted that Nicole Murray, a Special Educator at the Adams Middle School, will be the new Student Services Administrator at Adams, replacing Kelly Camp, who has moved into the Student Services Director position for the district, replacing Meg Camire.

Nicole Bottomley, principal of Holliston High School, pointed out how tenacious our teachers were with reaching out to and engaging with each of our students, especially those students who struggled in the remote learning environment. She also expressed her appreciation for how we maintained some of the Holliston High School traditions, such as the Awards night, Pops Concert, the Spring play, and Graduation, though these events may have looked different than they have in the past. She also noted that the last few months have been an opportunity to see what works and doesn’t, so that we can bring what works into the future and leave what doesn’t behind.

#### **Policy JKAA – Restraint of Students – Revision**

Mrs. Listewnik presented an amendment to Policy JKAA – Restraint of Students. She offered to answer questions from the Committee.

On a motion by Mrs. Listewnik and seconded by Ms. Hanstad, the Committee voted to amend Policy JKAA – Restraint of Students as presented.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Shaughnessy, yes; Ms. Kocian, yes; Ms. Neborsky, yes; Mrs. Listewnik, yes; Ms. Hanstad, yes; Mr. Morton, yes; Mrs. Raffi, yes.

Vote: Favor: 7                      Oppose: 0                      Abstain: 0                      Absent: 0

### **Policy JBD – Gender Identity Support – First Reading**

Mrs. Listewnik then presented new Policy JBD – Gender Identity Support. She read the policy in its entirety and then offered to take questions and comments from the Committee. A discussion followed.

The Committee then agreed to revisit the policy at their next meeting.

### **Updates to Holliston High School Handbook**

Ms. Bottomley reviewed changes to the Holliston High School Handbook, starting with the elimination of a decile rank. Currently, decile rank is used for determining valedictorian and salutatorian and to report to colleges; however, many districts have done away with decile rank. For those reasons, beginning with the 2020/2021 school year, Holliston High School intends to go forward using students' unweighted GPA.

Ms. Bottomley then discussed the handbook policy on college visits for students during their junior and senior years. She noted that a change would require an amendment to the School Committee policy.

The next handbook change involved dropping the \$5.00 charge for transcripts, and a change to the parameters surrounding the amount of time needed to create those transcripts.

Lastly, there was a change to eliminate the procedure surrounding a loss of course credit when a student incurs too many absences.

She took questions from the Committee, and a discussion followed.

On a motion by Ms. Neborsky and seconded by Mrs. Listewnik, the Committee voted to approve the changes to the Holliston High School Student/Parent Handbook for the 2020/2021 school year.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Shaughnessy, yes; Mr. Morton, yes; Ms. Neborsky, yes; Ms. Kocian, yes; Ms. Hanstad, yes; Mrs. Listewnik, yes; Mrs. Raffi, yes.

Vote: Favor: 7                      Oppose: 0                      Abstain: 0                      Absent: 0

### **Superintendent Succession Plan**

Mrs. Listewnik updated the Committee on the progress for the Interim Superintendent Screening Committee. The posting closed on June 12<sup>th</sup> with 28 applicants, of which nine were chosen for preliminary interviews. References are currently being contacted. The Screening Committee is hoping to begin interviews as early as next week. A brief discussion followed.

### **COVID-19 School Closure Update**

Dr. Jackson informed the Committee that there is a meeting scheduled next week with the Commissioner of Education and Superintendents, during which it is expected that the DESE will release new guidance regarding the fall opening. The Commissioner met with the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents and the Executive Committee last Saturday for further discussions. Dr. Jackson believes the planning to date, particularly around budgeting, is solid; however, scenario planning should be postponed for now, pending additional information from the State.

Dr. Jackson then shared the student participation data for remote learning, a copy of which was found in the packet. He stated that the reason there is no data for Miller and Placentino for "All Zoom Calls" is

because those were the weeks when we increased from one to multiple sections per week. He was pleased to point out that participation was very high.

Lastly, he reported that a K-12 parent survey has gone out asking for parent feedback on remote learning. He encouraged parents to provide their feedback.

Mrs. Raffi then reported that she had received a call from Select Board member Tina Hein, who informed her that the Town's application to the Executive Office of Administration and Finance for the Community Cares Act, eligible in the amount of \$1,317,137 combined for FY20 and FY21, was approved.

#### **FY21 Budget Update**

Ms. Hanstad stated that it is anticipated that the Spring Capital Request will change because of the teacher laptops at the high school, amounting to approximately \$70,000. She is hoping the budget will be voted by the Committee next week

Mrs. Raffi then recommended that several New Business items be tabled and an additional meeting be scheduled so that the Committee can discuss those agenda items. After a discussion it was agreed that the Committee would convene on Monday at 3:00 p.m. to discuss the remainder of the items from tonight's agenda, then again on Thursday to discuss the Capital Request.

#### **Capital Request Policy Update**

Ms. Hanstad gave a brief update on the Capital Request Policy, stating that the schedule is an issue because it does not line up with the School Committee schedule, in addition to several other points. There may be a discussion between attorneys regarding the legality of the Policy.

#### **Items of Information**

Mrs. Raffi stated that contained in the packet were minutes from the Policy Subcommittee of May 26, 2020, as well as approved minutes from Budget Subcommittee.

On a motion made by Mr. Morton and seconded by Mrs. Listewnik, the Committee voted to recess the meeting and reconvene on Monday, June 22, at 3:00 p.m., to complete the remainder of the agenda.

Roll Call Vote: Mrs. Listewnik, yes; Ms. Shaughnessy, yes; Ms. Kocian, yes; Ms. Hanstad, yes; Mr. Morton, yes; Ms. Neborsky, yes; Mrs. Raffi, yes.

Vote: Favor: 7                      Oppose: 0                      Abstain: 0                      Absent: 0

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Ahronian