

**HOLLIS SCHOOL BOARD
NOVEMBER 2, 2022
MEETING MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Hollis School Board was conducted on Wednesday, November 2, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. at the Hollis Primary School.

Amy Kellner, Chairman, presided:

Members of the Board Present: Caryl Roy, Vice Chairman
 Tammy Fareed, Secretary
 Brooke Arthur
 Robert Mann (arrived at 6:02 p.m.)

Members of the Board Absent:

Also Participating: Gina Bergskaug, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
 Donna Smith, Assistant Business Administrator

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS - None

CORRESPONDENCE / RESIGNATIONS / NOMINATIONS / RETIREMENTS

A letter of Intent to Retire was received from Raymond Danu having an effective date of October 31, 2022. In his letter he remarked he hopes this helps secure a more permanent school counselor position at HUES.

MOTION BY MEMBER ROY TO ACCEPT, WITH GRATITUDE FOR YEARS OF SERVICE, THE LETTER OF INTENT TO RETIRE RECEIVED FROM RAYMOND DANU WITH AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF OCTOBER 31, 2022

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ARTHUR

MOTION CARRIED

4-0-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Hollis School Board [October 5, 2022](#)

The following amendments were offered:

- Page 2, Line 37; insert “for” following “good”
- Page 2, Line 42; delete “1/” before “district”
- Page 4, Line 26; replace “hears” with “hear”
- Page 5, Line 17; replace “principles” with principal’s”
- Page 6, Line 1; replace “our” with “are”
- Page 8, Line 27; capitalize “Captain”

MOTION BY MEMBER FAREED TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ARTHUR

MOTION CARRIED

4-0-1

Member Roy Abstained

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MOTION BY MEMBER FAREED TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ARTHUR

MOTION CARRIED

4-0-1

Member Roy Abstained

PUBLIC INPUT

The public input period was declared open at 6:05 p.m.

No public input was offered.

Chairman Kellner stated the public input period would remain open until 6:40 p.m. having been identified on the agenda with a start time of 6:10 p.m. Should any member of the public arrive, during that time, and wish to provide input. they would be welcome to do so.

PRINCIPALS' REPORT

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug highlighted items from the report, which was provided as part of the [agenda](#) packet.

On November 9th, the HPS Veterans Day Ceremony will be student led by Mrs. O'Brien's 3rd grade class. The HUES Veterans Day Ceremony will be conducted on the 10th.

Work has been done on the wheelchair, stroller friendly bridge for easier access to the trails at HPS.

Enrollment numbers are fairly steady with a total increase of 3. Asked about kindergarten and 1st grade class size, she stated NESDEC enrollment figures will be sent to the Budget Committee for a discussion around the need for an additional teacher in grade 2 next year (current 1st grade enrollment of 95).

Member Fareed commented after several years, the district is catching up to NESDEC projections. Information provided shows that in each of the last 10 years there has been a record setting number of enrollments.

DISCUSSION

- FY22 Year-End Revenue and Expense Report

Donna Smith, Assistant Business Administrator, stated the year ended, on the expense side, with a savings of \$1,104,347. Savings were the result of positions that remained unfilled until year-end, new hires, and professional development (cancellations related to COVID).

On the revenue side, the year ended with an excess of \$398,222. Ninety six thousand of that was from the Health Trust surplus returned to the district. Approx. \$16,000 more than anticipated was received in special

education aid and Medicaid. A grant for approx. \$30,000 was awarded and applied towards special education transportation.

The result was an Unreserved Fund Balance of \$1,502,569. Following allocations made to the SAU Building Trust (\$23,970), Maintenance Trust (\$150,000), Special Education Trust (\$25,000) and Retained Fund Balance (\$284,000). The amount to be returned to the tax base to offset what has to be raised through taxation to support the current year's budget is \$1,019,599.

Member Fareed asked for clarification on the School Board/SAU Assessment note that states "Contingency offset by unanticipated legal fees" and was told the meaning is a portion of the \$95,000 contingency is shown to have been used (accounting note). At the end of the day, the funding source (contingency), although attributed to that line item, would not be decreased as the year ended in a surplus.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug added function codes relate to a series of accounts the funds come from. They are coming from the 2300 lines, but we are not pulling from the contingency fund. Member Fareed requested consideration be given to reporting that slightly differently if possible. She found it very confusing to see the statement.

Under the title of Food Service Bad Debt, a negative balance of \$1,033 is identified. Although lunches were free last year, a la carte items were not. Member Mann questioned why it is called bad debt and was told it is accounts that are not being paid by the families. Ms. Smith noted this only comes at the end of the fiscal year and is part of the auditing process.

- FY23 First Quarter Revenue and Expense Report

The FY23 budget totals \$15,573,557. During this time of year, although there are already year-to-date expenses, the district also looks to encumber what is believed will be expended for the remainder of the year. The total of the spent and anticipated expenditures results in a year-end savings of \$154,104.

Although there are higher personnel costs and unexpected contracted services, there remain unfilled positions, which brings the benefits cost down. Special Education contracted services are greater than expected at this time for Occupational Therapy.

The current projected revenue for FY23 is \$16,049,150. To date the district has received \$6,700 in renewable energy credits, which were not accounted for within the budget (could not anticipate the amount or timing of receipt).

The result is an anticipated unreserved fund balance of \$163,715 before consideration of allocations to the various trust funds. Were the district to fund the School Building Maintenance Trust (\$150,000), SAU Building Trust (\$23,970) and Special Education Trust (\$25,000), the result would be a deficit of \$35,255 prior to consideration of an allocation to the Retained Fund Balance.

Asked if any progress is being made in terms of hiring, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the process continues and individuals have been hired; however, the situation continues to be challenging.

The request was made for an update on the balance remaining in the water trust.

- FY 24 Budget - New Items Spreadsheet

The budgeting process started in July with the Principals and various departments asked to bring forward their new item requests. The Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent review the list and adjust.

Under the heading of Academics, the math subscription is up. The Assistant Superintendent is in the process of conducting a math curriculum review with all four of the elementary schools. The process has included middle and high school representation to have a K-12 view to ensure whatever decisions are made at this level make sense for them on the receiving end.

The \$2,000 listed under each of the schools is to address the likelihood of inflation on items already known to be needed. The increase for classroom supplies is also dictated by inflation.

Asked about the proposed cost (\$6,000) for Curriculum Enrichment, which has been zeroed out in round 2, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated there are curriculum enrichment line items within the budget and the decision was made to not put additional funding towards those at this time. Member Roy reiterated this would have been additional funding to an existing pool of funds.

Most of the fieldtrips have a parent-paid portion and a lot of times the PTA supports them as well. Last year a huge portion of the 6th grade end-of-year trip was grant funded.

Addressing increased costs, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug provided the example of a case of paper, which was previously at a cost of \$22 and budgeted for that amount. The district is being billed at \$60/case. The increases are mandatory. Without simply including an increase across the board, a few areas were highlighted.

Asked how the district is managing the increased costs within the current budget, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug spoke of some areas of known costs such as the transportation contract. However, there are also areas such as special education transportation where the vendor is now charging \$200 per one-way trip. That cost was previously billed at \$100/trip.

The inability to hire and the savings gained there has assisted with covering some of the increased costs. The district encumbers funding for known and required expenses to avoid running out of funds before year end. As we get closer to year end, if not utilized, the funds are released. Having to create a budget a year and a half in advance, there is no way of accounting for all potential impacts.

Member Mann noted the \$1,104,347 that will be returned to the tax base and questioned if there is sufficient savings through the various trust funds to be able to address potential shortfalls. He would not want to end up in a position where the trusts are reduced, perhaps to zero balances, and still fall short. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated she is quite comfortable with the number and sources of funds in the Hollis district more so than the other two districts. Percentagewise it is larger than in the COOP and there remains the Contingency Fund. Yes, it is a worry that everything is that much more expensive, but she feels this district is in the best position to manage that.

Member Mann was asked if he was suggesting the Board consider allocating some of the year-end fund balance towards known expenses. Chairman Kellner stated that is an action that would have had to occur prior to the audit.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug remarked there were a lot of reasons why that dollar amount was unknown, one being food service was much higher and comes up at the very end. Member Mann noted schools cannot

operate in the negative. Member Fareed added, unlike towns, school districts cannot retain unexpended funds at year-end beyond allocations to the various trust funds (for identified purposes) that have been approved in advance.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug continued with the discussion of the new items list noting the district is also engaging in a district-wide conversation about literacy. While focused primarily on Tier II and special education approaches to literacy, it all begins with Tier I. A comprehensive (K-12) evaluation is being conducted (\$2,250 at HPS/\$1,900 at HUES). The costs will be split between special education and regular education to provide robust professional development to ensure we have experts in the field directing the day-to-day instruction in literacy and ensure that when we are selecting programs that they are those that best meet the needs of the student(s).

Online software subscriptions (Learning A-Z software) are identified at HPS (\$2,300). At HUES, playground mats are proposed (\$1,000). The new Library Media Specialist at HUES has identified the funds budgeted year after year were going to actual books and we do not have a library database (\$2,000 software cost). The desire is to move in that direction to prepare students for accessing materials in that way. Replacement of a bookcase is needed in the library (\$1,200).

Under the heading of Personnel, at both HPS and HUES, \$3,000 is identified to cover the cost of revamping the mentoring program given the influx of new teachers. An Instructional Coach (SAU wide) has been added (grant funded this year). The desire is to integrate that into the budget. It is likely the district will look to increase the environmental teaching at HUES due to a change in personnel (additional \$5,000 stipend). In round 1, the request had been to add a teacher/position. When you look at what that looks like in the schedule, there is no room for another specialist. One conversation is do you switch Spanish and Environmental Science. The recommendation at this point, is to boost that environmental science stipend and bring someone in so that it is a similar model to what we have this year.

Also included in round 1 that did not make the cut in round 2, was the \$8,728 for a Directed Classroom Substitute and \$1,060 for the Assistant Director of Facilities, which are shared positions across all three district budgets. If the positions do not make it into one or more of the budgets, they are removed. A request was made to increase stipends for various positions. That issue becomes a little complex as many are SAU driven and a change would be needed across the entire SAU. That cannot be supported in this budget. Vertical Academic teams stipends were proposed for HUES (new; do not exist at HPS). It did not make sense to differentiate between the two buildings.

Under the heading of Special Education Personnel/Training, requested at HPS was an additional special education administrative support person (\$69,663). The bulk of the request stems from the increased needs in all of our preschool programming. We hear the need, and the responsibility for both of the preschool programs (preschool and intensive needs preschool) will become that of the Assistant Director of Special Education at the SAU. Students can be put between the two buildings based on program and student needs (better meets the needs). From what is being heard from the Director of Student Services, 95% of preschool is run at the district level and not the building level.

Member Fareed commented she misses hearing of the efficacy of the different interventions that we use in our schools. We do not say enough to the public about how much special education and reading/math intervention tools and techniques have changed and how many more students we are able to bring from a different path than maybe nature might have ordained.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug commented in Friday's newsletter the Principals are going to share some information from the middle school. Our middle school special education administrator and the team there are putting together monthly seminars/parent information nights. The first one is November 9th on executive functioning. Some will be more in depth in terms of special education needs, etc. Also with the literacy program update, a huge portion of that will become parent information night(s) on why different programs are selected.

Member Mann remarked we also need some kind of material for residents who do not have kids in the schools but are supporting the schools within the community. He questioned how we give visibility to community members who may not be as closely connected to the schools. If we have success stories to share, maybe some high-level metrics, etc.

The literature program upgrade, BCBA Assistant (1.0), RBT trained paraprofessionals (3), and Occupational Therapist (0.5) are student driven. The request for the paraprofessional for the 4th grade class has been zeroed out because it was not student driven.

No items are listed under the heading of new computer equipment.

Replacement Computer Equipment includes the replacement cycle for staff laptops (10 at each school), the addition of interactive flat panels (5 for HPS and 3 for HUES), audio system replacement – Phase II (HPS); existing system will go up to HUES, projector replacement cycle (2 at HPS and 2 at HUES), Chromebooks are requested for HPS (\$36,750). The district is doing one-to-one for grades 1-12. Grade 1 students will get a Chromebook and retain it until grade 6 (end of life). At both schools two Uninterrupted Power Supplies (battery backup) are proposed (\$2,000 each school). At HUES, listed is a copier for the staff room (\$5,000).

Under the heading of Shared Services/Software, each school lists windows imaging software (\$456), critical system backup (\$800) and SMART suite licenses (\$2,500).

Under Safety/Compliance Issues, at HPS, listed are the walkie talkie replacements (10) (\$2,500) and at HUES burglar alarms (\$20,000), kiln replacement (\$4,000); when moved to redo the flooring it was noted the kiln is cracked (repair and replacement costs are similar), and walkie talkies (4) (\$700).

Under Facilities/Maintenance, at HPS, 2nd door set entry buzzer (\$4,000) and at HUES classroom furniture – Phase II (\$5,000), ceiling tiles (\$3,000); may or may not be needed, playground mulch (\$3,000) and plumbing fixtures (\$2,000). Items that are highlighted in blue were moved to the Maintenance Trust. At HPS the intent is to rebuild the Univents/box heaters in the outside rooms, replace exterior doors and classroom flooring. At HUES, kitchen flooring replacement, a generator for Rocky Pond is needed, but cannot be addressed until first acquiring the transfer switch. The hot water pump on the 1st floor might be removed. Although emitting a strange noise, the pump is functioning at this time. Also listed is classroom flooring.

The projected total warrant, at this time, is \$15,573,557 or 9.41% over the approved FY23 budget. When deciding on whether to keep or remove an item, what is being considered is what has the greatest impact on the greatest number of students.

Noted was that some of the items on the new items list are mandated and required to be in next year's budget. Most of that is related to special education personnel. Hollis and the COOP do a nice job of pulling some items out when doing the guidance calculation so that regular education is kind of protected and we are really focusing on those items that do have a little bit more wiggle room.

- SAU 41 Annual Meeting Calendar for Review

The date of the Public Hearing is February 7, 2023 with a snow date of the 9th, and the date of the District Meeting is March 15, 2023 with a snow date of the 16th.

DELIBERATIONS

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the Anti-Discrimination Plan reviewed at last month's meeting

MOTION BY MEMBER ROY TO APPROVE THE ANTI-DISCRIMINATION PLAN, AS PRESENTED MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MANN

ON THE QUESTION

Requested changes have been made.

Member Arthur remarked it came to her attention, following the last meeting, that the question she had posed regarding professional development for teachers around anti-bias training would not be possible at this time due to laws that came into effect in New Hampshire within the past year or so. It is not possible on a district-wide or administrative level. It is possible for teachers perhaps on a case-by-case basis.

MOTION CARRIED 5-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding policy **EBBD** - Indoor Air Quality and Water Quality
 - 1st Reading 10-5-22 (as amended)

Given its 2nd Reading;

MOTION BY MEMBER ROY TO ACCEPT THE SECOND READING OF POLICY EBBD - INDOOR AIR QUALITY AND WATER QUALITY MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MANN

ON THE QUESTION

No changes have been proposed since the time of the last reading.

Member Roy noted the need for consistency when referring to "Superintendent or designee". There are instances of "Superintendent/designee". Noted were instances of simply "Superintendent".

MOTION CARRIED 5-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding policy **JCA** – Change of School or Assignment – Best Interests and Manifest Hardship
 - 1st Reading 10-5-22 (as amended)

Given its 2nd Reading;

MOTION BY MEMBER ROY TO AMEND POLICY JCA - CHANGE OF SCHOOL OR ASSIGNMENT – BEST INTERESTS AND MANIFEST HARDSHIP, BY INSERTING “OR DESIGNEE” FOLLOWING “SUPERINTENDENT, AND ACCEPT THE SECOND READING, AS AMENDED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MANN

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding policy **JLD** - School Guidance and Counseling Program
 - 1st Reading 6-1-22

Given its 2nd Reading;

MOTION BY MEMBER ARTHUR TO AMEND POLICY JLD – SCHOOL GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAM, BY REPLACING THE FIRST BULLETED ITEM WITH “CONNECTING FAMILIES TO COMMUNITY SUPPORTS WHEN NEEDED”, IN THE FIRST PARAGRAPH FOLLOWING THE BULLETED ITEMS BY INSERTING “WHEN NEEDED” FOLLOWING “SUPPORTS” AND BY DELETING “CAREER AWARENESS” BEFORE “INTERESTS”, AND ACCEPT THE SECOND READING, AS AMENDED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ROY

ON THE QUESTION

The policy came forward on June 1st. Time was spent over the summer considering feedback received and what it is that our guidance and counseling program does. From there, were conversations around it is not universal, but when needed; we do use many of these items, but not necessarily for every student which is where the language “when needed” came into play.

Member Fareed commented on the last line being bothersome to her. It reads “The guidance counselor is responsible for developing a program or plan that identifies student success in academic performance, social awareness, and interests.” It is an incredible statement to make.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug spoke of the healthy discussion that occurred around the role. Developing a program or plan is not guaranteeing that everything will work out according to it. You are really trying to set up a plan for success. Asked if that is going to be developed for every student in the building (when needed not included here). Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the thought process to be that the plan for success is what we offer and then when we need to make a change to that plan and look at other pieces, e.g., providing more social awareness or interest based surveys, etc., then we make a change to that plan.

Member Fareed commented to her that sentence is what the Superintendent’s job is, what the Board’s job is, what the Principal’s job is, what the parent’s job is. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug suggested it could read “The District is responsible....”. Member Fareed wished for the language to be more general; the word “identifies” is troublesome (perhaps could be replaced with “promotes”).

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

NON-PUBLIC

**MOTION BY MEMBER FAREED THAT THE BOARD, BY ROLL CALL, GO INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION PURSUANT TO RSA 91-A:3 II (a) THE DISMISSAL, PROMOTION OR COMPENSATION OF ANY PUBLIC EMPLOYEE AND (c) TO DISCUSS A MATTER, WHICH IF DISCUSSED IN PUBLIC, WOULD LIKELY AFFECT ADVERSELY THE REPUTATION OF A PERSON, OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF THE BODY OR AGENCY ITSELF
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ROY**

A Viva Voce Roll Call was conducted, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Tammy Fareed, Brooke Arthur, Robert Mann, Carryl Roy, Amy Kellner 5
Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

*The Board went into non-public session at 7:25 p.m.
The Board came out of non-public session at 7:45 p.m.*

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY MEMBER ROY TO ADJOURN
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MANN
MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0**

The November 2, 2022, meeting of the Hollis School Board adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Date _____ Signed _____