

**HOLLIS BROOKLINE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BOARD
JANUARY 20, 2021
MEETING MINUTES**

A meeting of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board was conducted on Wednesday, January 20, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Hollis Brookline Middle School Library.

Holly Deurloo Babcock, Chairman, presided:

Members of the Board Present: Tom Solon, Vice Chairman
 Kate Stoll, Secretary
 Elizabeth Brown (participated electronically)
 Cindy VanCoughnett (participated electronically)
 Krista Whalen
 Beth Janine Williams

Members of the Board Absent:

Also in Attendance: Andrew Corey, Superintendent
 Gina Bergskaug, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
 Bob Thompson, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services
 Tim Girzone, Principal, Hollis Brookline Middle School
 Drew Mason, District Moderator

As members VanCoughnett and Brown were participating electronically, Chairman Deurloo Babcock requested they state, for the record, where they were, why their attendance in person as not reasonably practical, who, if anyone, was with them, and whether or not they were able to hear the proceedings.

Member VanCoughnett

Stated she was participating electronically from home, her attendance in person was not reasonably practical due to COVID-19, she was alone in the room she was in, and could hear the proceedings.

Member Brown

Member Brown stated she was in Waco, TX, attendance in person was not reasonably practicable given her location, she was alone in her hotel room, and could hear the proceedings.

The Board was reminded that all votes would be taken by Roll Call.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock noted Member VanCoughnett intended to listen to the meeting and actively participate during deliberation.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

**MOTION BY MEMBER SOLON 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
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS**

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

Yea: Krista Whalen, Kate Stoll, Beth Janine Williams, Elizabeth Brown, Tom Solon,
Holly Deurloo Babcock

6

Nay:

0

MOTION CARRIED

*The Board went into non-public session at 6:03 p.m.
The Board came out of non-public session at 6:59 p.m.*

APPOINTMENT OF PROCESS OBSERVER

Chairman Deurloo Babcock appointed Vice Chairman Solon as Process Observer.

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

The period for public input and acceptance of meeting minutes for the December 9, 2020 meetings and the January 6, 2021 special meeting were inadvertently omitted from the agenda. A request was made to add the items.

The following deliberative items were requested to be added to the agenda; action relative to the subject matter of the non-public session, and action on the Tentative Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), Annual Meeting, and consideration of placing amendments to the Articles of Agreement on the Warrant.

There being no objection, the agenda was amended as requested.

NOMINATIONS/RESIGNATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE

Superintendent Corey spoke of the successful re-opening thanking the students and teachers. The Administrative team is looking out to the February vacation and whether data may indicate the need for a few days of remote learning following that time. Students will be out of the buildings on March 9th for voting day. The data is being closely monitored with the goal of returning to the buildings immediately following vacation, but if it is believed travel increased, different aspects of the virus start to reappear, etc., remote learning may be considered.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board. [December 9, 2020](#)

The following amendments were offered:

- Page 3, Line 37; replace “were” with “where”
- Page 6, Line 48; replace the “.” With a “,” following “noting”
- Page 8, Line 9; replace “currently” with “concurrently”
- Page 11, Line 14; replace “He” with “Superintendent Corey”
- Page 12, Line 34; replace “purpose” with “purposely”

**MOTION BY MEMBER WILLIAMS TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SOLON**

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

Yea: Krista Whalen, Holly Deurloo Babcock, Tom Solon, Beth Janine Williams, Kate Stoll,
Elizabeth Brown

6

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board – **Non-Public** [December 9, 2020](#)

**MOTION BY MEMBER WILLIAMS TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SOLON**

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

Yea: Krista Whalen, Holly Deurloo Babcock, Tom Solon, Beth Janine Williams, Kate Stoll,
Elizabeth Brown

6

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board – **Special**. [January 6, 2021](#)

The following amendment was offered:

Page 3, Line 32; end the sentence with a “?”

**MOTION BY MEMBER WILLIAMS TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SOLON**

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

Yea: Krista Whalen, Holly Deurloo Babcock, Tom Solon, Beth Janine Williams, Elizabeth Brown

5

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

Member Stoll Abstained

PRINCIPAL AND ATHLETIC REPORTS

Tim Girzone, Principal, Hollis Brookline Middle School, congratulated the Patriot Pen Essay winner, Daniel Geller on winning the District competition and moving on to the State level. A formal recognition of his achievements will be made at the end of the year.

The Building Maintenance Supervisor position was recently filled by Mr. Ben Arria.

The 8th Grade/Rising Freshman Parent Night is Thursday, February 11th beginning at 6:00 p.m. (Zoom).

The Robert E. Kelly Award (plaque) will hang in the main office by the end of the year.

High School athletics are in full swing. Although the high school numbers are lower than usual for the winter season, the Middle School numbers saw a significant increase due to not making any cuts and offering intramurals only.

Congratulated were the 28 New Hampshire Athletic Director's Association and the NHIAA Scholar Athletes for achieving this accomplishment for the 2020-2021 school year. These student athletes must participate in 2 or more sports in their senior year while maintaining a B+ average or better and give back to the community in one form or another.

Principal Girzone highlighted the information included in Principal Barnes' report. An Executive Summary of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey conducted in the spring of 2019 was attached. A significant decrease was seen in the number of students who have ever taken prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription and a decrease in the availability. The survey showed a significant increase in the number and percentage of students who used marijuana one or more times during the past 30 days (23.9% versus 14.2% in 2017). Despite the rise, the number was still lower than the regional average of 25.3%. Noted was that a lot of these increases could potentially be attributed to the increase in vaping. There are some concerning numbers with regard to the increase in usage related to some harder drugs.

In the area of sexual & dating violence, the numbers are trending in a positive direction. In the area of suicide helplessness, and sadness, the number of students who attempted suicide one or more times during the past 12 months was 4.5% compared to regional average of 5.6% and the national average of 7%.

Tobacco use numbers are trending higher. In 2017, the number of students who reported ever having used an electronic vapor product was 26% compared to the regional average of 38% and in 2019, over 41% compared to regional average of 47.1%.

In the area of physical inactivity and unhealthy dietary behaviors, noted is the significant rise in the number of students who played video or computer games or used a computer 3 or more hours a day on an average school day.

In the area of bullying, electronic bullying, and fighting, a significant decrease in the number of students who carried a weapon during the last 30 days. There was a slight increase in the number of students who were bullied on school property (23.6% compared to regional at 18.2% and state at 23%).

Under the heading of other health risks, the number of students reporting they got 8 or more hours of sleep per night has declined at the same rate as regional and state averages.

Asked if the district continues with the programs around safety, Superintendent Corey stated Officer Bergeron conducts the safety pieces, e.g., seat belt test, drunk goggles. Survey results help focus the activities. Noted was the length of time for the survey results to be available. It informs our practices and what we can do from a socioemotional learning perspective.

PUBLIC INPUT

Brooke Arthur, 74 Ridge Road, Hollis

Stated her support of the Board adopting a resolution pertaining to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Whether the Board adopts the particular language offered is not particular to her, but that the Board has the courage to do the right thing and take ownership of a resolution.

She spoke of a communication from legal counsel at the New Hampshire School Board Association, who, when asked about school boards making resolutions, commented although not common in the State, there are no legal implications of doing so; "A resolution is not a policy in the traditional sense, so you are not dictating behavior or implementing consequences. It is more a statement of belief coming from the board."

Ms. Arthur urged the Board to take a stand and make the statement that this Board supports work in the area of DEI for our schools, and that it will support the Administration in doing the necessary work.

Diane Marsolini, 27 Laurel Crest Drive, Brookline

Spoke of her support of the DEI initiative, and her hope the Board would support a resolution. The initiative is simply requesting that the District commit to evaluating practices and curriculum to ensure the accuracy of the curriculum the students are being taught as well as providing the best experience for all of our students.

The work is a step in the direction of supporting our teachers and students in navigating difficult conversations. It will help to understand different biases that we all have and that impact the way we interact with each other. This work will teach our students to learn from and value differences and to respect one another even when they disagree; important skills as they move on to post-secondary education and careers.

Many community members have shared personal experiences that show there is room for improvement. In order for all our students to do their best, they need to know they are valued. This work is an opportunity for the District to demonstrate to the students that it is committed to providing the best education experience to all.

Dan Glass, 6 Nightingale Road, Brookline

Read the following statement from Tanya Vera into the record:

"My name is Tanya Vera. I live at 6 Nightingale Road in Brookline. I am writing to request the School Board's support of the Hollis-Brookline Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiative. I have lived in Brookline for over 12 years. I have a master's degree in psychology and trained in assessments, and have worked in parent, education, child abuse and neglect, and domestic violence support. Historic events over the past year point to schisms. Racism has been declared a public health crisis. Hate group participation and extremism are growing. Political discourse has become violent in words and sometimes in actions. It is a time of reckoning. It seems reasonable to look at our schools and see what can be done to ensure our students have the necessary skills to manage in our country and globally.

Education is critical to a smoothly functioning democracy. Critical thinking skills, often formed when we need to reconcile information from different perspectives, is crucial. Representation of different voices is an essential part of this process. Respectful communication is key. Our children need to learn how to navigate well in a diverse world that includes identities based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion,

political orientation, physical ability, and more. Moreover, we need to ensure that our students, all of our students, are getting what they need to be successful.

I support looking at policies and making an appropriate plan to address any issues that are identified related to the diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative.”

Tiffany Testa, 101 Mooar Hill Road, Hollis

As a member of the Superintendent’s DEI Advisory Committee, she spoke of being proud of the work that has been done. She has a strong belief that every student should have the opportunity to have their voice valued and that we should be an educational place that makes a space for those voices to be heard, for critical thinking to be enacted in all of the students and their minds. What she came to realize, through the work, is how politicized this has become. She spoke of bridges having been made and provided the example of the committee being formed to advise the Superintendent, and a request for the process to become public. The Committee sought public input from every individual who attended. The overwhelming response was support of the effort. There were those who did not share the same ideology and views as her and others on the Committee.

The resolution before the Board has changed a great deal from its original form as it represents the Town, the team itself, and the diversity of views of the group of people that was brought together. It is also a tribute to the amount of bridge building that it represents. A resolution has no meaning beyond an affirmation of the support and beliefs.

She is hopeful the Board will support the Strategic Plan, going forward, will not only put social and emotional learning in the forefront, but also diversity, equity, and inclusion. That is what will make our students stronger and more critical thinkers.

Marie Ramas, 9 Coburn Lane, Hollis

Stated her support of the resolution. As a family physician and a mom of a rising 9th grade student, a ten-year old, and a five-year old, she is proud of how our community has shown interest in the discussion of DEI. She has heard over and over that the resolution has stirred community engagement from all stakeholders. She asked the Board, when reviewing the resolution, to view it as an evolution of the integration of thoughts, beliefs, and really boiling down to what we want as parents and community members for our students to gain and to grow in.

At the end of the day, we want our students prepared to think critically and to engage in courageous conversations. Especially in the midst of COVID, we have all recognized that there are disparities and difficulties that our kids are going through. This is shining a light on the work that is being done in this district.

She spoke of being proud to be part of a school district that is leading the State, on multiple fronts, on how to create leaders for the future. She noted our students in the high school and middle school have shown interest in these issues.

The Bedford School District has also formed a DEI Committee that is working on the same issues. What a wonderful way that two of the best school districts in the State can come together and really create a footprint that the rest of the State can follow. She encouraged the Board to review the resolution from the context of the community members and look at making a statement of affirmation of what the District is already doing.

Katie Parikh, 8 Petersen Road, Brookline

Spoke of her support of the DEI Initiative. She believes this effort will lift up every child in this district and will bring what is an exceptionally good school district to excellence. This is about including every child, accepting all differences, and preparing our students to leave this school system and function in a really diverse world.

As a Committee member, she spoke in support of the process that was utilized. She commented on it being a diverse group of people getting together and having tough conversations. The document is not perfect but does represent a unique flavor, Brookline, and Hollis. We are richly diverse towns with richly diverse students who deserve to be valued.

Vanessa Hale, 43 Taylor Drive, Brookline

Requested the Board support the DEI initiative. She commented some may think DEI conversations do not belong in a predominantly white community, but we must ask ourselves why our community is so homogeneous in many ways, and how we may be inadvertently excluding or silencing those with marginalized identities. We must also recognize that this conversation not only includes race, but that we have students and staff with many diverse identities. As an LGBTQ person, Hollis-Brookline graduate, and employee of this district, this initiative directly affects her feelings of safety and support. Educators play a huge role in students' development of their own identities as well as their understanding of people, communities, the world, and how they will move into the world post-graduation.

We do a significant disservice to our students by avoiding DEI topics in the classroom, ignoring our students' diverse identities, or teaching a whitewashed version of history in our classrooms. We must identify practices that hold our students back, and we cannot do that alone and without a DEI initiative. Without DEI policies, we are completely unaware of and cannot properly address how our district may be disproportionately disciplining certain groups of students, offering unequal access to opportunities to students and staff or neglecting to properly handle cases of harassment and bullying on the basis of identities. The work of a district is to prepare all of its students for the world. Keeping in mind their diverse identities and their potential to work or live with diverse groups in the future is imperative to our students' success in this changing world.

DEI work is uplifting, empowering, and enlightening. DEI is justice, truth, and liberty for all. DEI creates stronger working, living, and learning relationships and a public school is central to that role within a truly inclusive community.

She strongly encouraged the Board to support and move forward with this necessary step.

Dan Glass, 6 Nightingale Road, Brookline

Stated his support of the resolution noting resolutions are simple and with little cost and great benefits. The draft resolution reads in part "1. The SAU #41 school districts will make diversity, equity, and inclusion a strategic priority by actively supporting such efforts." Choosing to not actively support diversity is choosing to cultivate a culture of homogeneity and coerced conformity. Choosing to not actively support equity is choosing to condone inequity and unfairness. Choosing to not actively support inclusion is making a choice to champion exclusion and disrespect. The burden of supporting these principles is not only in proportion to their need, it is very lightly so. The cost of ignoring them, whether willfully or blindly, not wanting trouble or believing that things will take care of themselves, those costs are immense.

Some might argue it will take time away from other endeavors, but it will reclaim the time and energy that our community's children are spending on managing fears, distress at being discounted and disrespected, and their anxiety over putting their ideas out into the community. Whatever time is taken will be given back in multitude.

Some might argue that we do not have a problem. If that is the case, there will be little discomfort as we get this simple checkup. If we do have a problem though we will have begun to address it.

Mr. Glass spoke of living in the community for over 12 years, and remarked it is clear to him that while in a lot of cases we do not have problems, there are a lot of cases where we do. We have these problems, and it is irresponsible to ignore them. It would be irresponsible to avoid the DEI resolution. The responsible thing to do is acknowledge that we have challenges and address them.

DISCUSSION

- Annual Meeting Discussion

Asked if there was any additional information to share concerning Senate Bill 2, Drew Mason, District Moderator, stated the Bill, which is unfortunately named SB2, passed the Senate and is in committee in the House.

In terms of the choices available today, the Board must decide to have an annual meeting between March 1 and March 25, but the Moderator, based on emergency, can postpone it (as long as necessary). Under that scenario, the Board can decide when to have the annual meeting.

Mr. Mason commented the draft of the Bill he has read would allow the governing body/School Board to decide they would like to have a meeting on a certain date, and then by having a public hearing and a vote, could make that happen.

In either case, unless the Bill comes through with a rather surprising answer, the Board can decide when to have the meeting, and the legal process to achieve that result would be undertaken.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock asked for clarification the Board could decide, at this time, the date of a meeting, and would not have to determine how to carry out the logistics of that meeting until a later date. Mr. Mason stated that to be correct.

Vice Chairman Solon asked if choosing the date would determine the type of meeting that would be conducted and was told it would not. He commented on the timetable previously provided and questioned if a decision would have to be made at this time if the desire of the Board were for a virtual meeting in the early to mid-March timeframe. Mr. Mason stated it would. He noted during the January 6th meeting he heard a rather strong expression that the Board wished for an in-person outdoor meeting later in the spring. When and how we have the meeting is up to the School Board.

Superintendent Corey remarked the meeting needs to be scheduled between March 1 and March 25. Because of that, we need to continue with our regularly published schedule for public hearings. As we get closer to that meeting, we can postpone it; similar to what was done last year. However, the public hearing on the budget would be conducted as currently scheduled. What the Board should consider is moving forward with that date and the requirements so that we meet all legal requirements. As the date approaches, the Board, working with the Moderator, could then move the date.

Mr. Mason stated the budget public hearing is required to be relative to the election day. It does not move even if you move the annual meeting into July. What could move is the virtual hearings relative to a drive-thru vote if that is what the Board wished to do.

Superintendent Corey stated the problem is a date has been published for March and the public hearings are based on the State RSAs governing that. He believes the safest course to achieve the desired outcome is to continue forward with the current schedule, work with the Moderator, and based on the data as we get closer to the date, the Board could postpone the meeting, but would have satisfied the legal requirements.

Asked for his opinion, Mr. Mason stated the logistics of a drive-thru vote and two virtual meetings are challenging. An outdoor in-person annual meeting in some pleasant weather time is what he would like to see happen.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock summarized the Board would continue with its current schedule (March 2nd meeting) and then determine, at a later date, when to potentially postpone to in order to accommodate an outdoor meeting. Mr. Mason stated that to be accurate.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned if there is not the option of a drive-thru of the format we had last year and was told there is not. Superintendent Corey commented on having spoken with legal counsel and stated he would not recommend a drive-thru meeting. If the meeting is moved, it would be an alternative ballot, but that could be done within the confines of the high school and developed so that it could be run through the voting machines. Vice Chairman Solon asked if the alternate meeting time could be postponed beyond March and was told that could be done. Asked if that could be done now, Mr. Mason stated, with the Moderator's help, yes.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned if there is any risk the Moderator would not be permitted to make such a decision at this time (two months away); were the Board to choose a date of say March 15 tonight, could the Moderator later tonight or tomorrow state that it would be postponed to May 15 for example. Mr. Mason stated he could, or he could do it up until the morning of March 15.

Vice Chairman Solon commented if not soon, the Board has to go through the procedures that support a May date. If postponing quickly, the timeframe for the activities leading up to the annual meeting are also delayed.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock remarked should there be the need for an alternate method, required would be a mailing and two virtual meetings. Vice Chairman Solon commented even if having an outdoor meeting, there are other things that have to be scheduled/occur prior to the meeting in addition to the budget hearing, e.g., public hearings on petition warrant articles. Mr. Mason noted the due date for petition warrant articles remains the same (February 2nd), regardless of when the meeting is conducted.

Superintendent Corey stated his recommendation to be to continue towards the March 2 meeting and allow the Moderator to push it back, if needed.

Asked if it is known whether either of the towns or the Hollis School District has decided to go with the alternate virtual meeting, Mr. Mason responded what he has heard from both is they want to have outdoor in-person regular annual meetings later in the spring. Asked if that is the case for both towns, Mr. Mason was uncertain what the Town of Brookline was looking to do. Superintendent Corey stated that to be their preference. Asked if they have changed their meeting dates, Mr. Mason stated that has not yet occurred. He believes they are waiting to see how things develop. Both towns are having the local election as a regular local election on March 9. He has had regular emails with Peter Webb, Brookline District Moderator, who has been

communicating with the Brookline Selectboard. Mr. Mason stated his belief they are talking about March 24 for an annual meeting.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock remarked, at this point, we have a scheduled annual meeting for March 2. We can proceed with all of the hearings and the current calendar with the expectation that because we want an in-person outdoor meeting, we will be postponing that March 2 date. Out of courtesy to the community, we would like to get that information out by the next meeting. Chairman Deurloo Babcock requested members of the Board not in agreement with that statement make it known. No disagreement was stated.

Mr. Mason stated there to be nothing that prohibits the Board from noticing that the meeting date is scheduled for March 2, but that it will be postponed to a date certain.

Member Williams departed at 8:06 p.m. and returned during the presentation.

- Data Presentation

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug provided a presentation (copy included as part of agenda packet). Last spring, the State of New Hampshire cancelled State testing due to the pandemic. Late in the summer, in the middle of re-opening plans, the District was made aware of the requirement to complete fall testing and told the data would be helpful to the District; would be able to refine curriculum and adjust instruction based on the information. Interim testing was done for 7th and 8th grade students. The fall (Interim) testing is not the summative testing, which is what we typically do in the spring. The SAT was done for the 12th grade students who would have taken it as 11th grade students in the spring.

Tested were prior year skills. State-wide data was not provided. Across the entire SAU, math was impacted more so than English Language Arts (ELA). It is believed to be the case because in math there is more individualized instruction, more students utilize individual support in CAVBlock or in Skills. They tend to be math and science heavy. We are often providing extra help in the area of math especially as students age up.

Looking at the New Hampshire State Assessment System (NHSAS) scores, overall student scores for assessment range from 1-4. Students who receive a 3 or 4 on a summative assessment are deemed to be Proficient. Individual standards within the content are evaluated on a performance distribution of 1, 2, or 3; 1 is below standard, 3 is achieved the standard comfortably and 2 is met or nearly met the standard. Twos have to be further divided and eventually pushed over to the proficient or not proficient range.

When looking at how our students performed on individual standards, what was helpful with the interim assessment as opposed to the summative, is the ability to drill down question by question, student by student.

Referring to charts being displayed, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug remarked looking at the ELA individual standards, we are looking at the language standards and reading standards for informational text. Looking at the fall language standards, the blue bar represents the current grade 7 (6th grade skills) and the red is the current 8th grade (7th grade skills).

First looking at the language standards, this is a relative weakness in the 7th and 8th grade students meaning we had more students scoring a 1. Looking at reading standards for informational text, this is a relative strength based on the number of students that scored in the 3 range.

With the interim testing you are able to drill down question by question for a whole grade level cohort or individual students to fine-tune intervention.

The final individual standard for ELA is writing. It is graded by a computer, which sometimes produces invalid scores. Specifically, we teach our students to turn the question around when responding, so we are writing in complete sentences and utilizing the prompt to assist us. Sometimes that confuses the computer and appears as though the student has copied, nullifying the score. Looking at the results, it is less telling. However, if you look at individual rubrics within the writing standards, we have relative strengths in conventions and organization. The area for improvement would be providing relevant evidence.

In the area of math, and expressions and equations, this is certainly an area of strength for our students. Ratios and proportional relationships is fairly strong, and the number system. The other two standards were not consistent between our 7th and 8th grade students.

Looking at performance over time, what is important is to understand that it is not an apples-to-apples comparison. In 2016, the district did a paper version of the Smarter Balanced test, in 2017 it was a computer/adaptive Smarter Balanced test; scoring mechanism completely different and the student experience with taking a computer adaptive test was new. In 2018, it was the computer/adaptive Statewide Assessment System, different test. Between 2018 and 2019 are the only two years where the same test was taken from year to year. In 2020, we are not taking a summative assessment, we are doing an interim assessment. A summative test will be done in the spring.

In Math, our students performed within the range. To pull the data from our 7th graders and compare their scores with their 6th grade skills - they are two different districts and is not comparable.

The district started administering PSAT 8/9 in the fall of 2018. This year all students in-person and remote were invited into the building to take the assessment. There were 170 test takers of the 216 in the cohort. There was a slight dip in math, which was seen across the entire district.

The PSAT data for 11th grade students was displayed. A review of comparable scores over time indicates a slight decline for this cohort, but more of a decline over time with math performance.

What is important to understand is what is being done with this information (short and long-term). Dena Johnson, College Board, is working with teachers (during collaboration time) to understand how to dig into the data and get grade level trends so that all students will receive additional math support (between now and year end). What is important is the end of March when the grade 11 students will take the SAT State Assessment.

The data will be dug into further going student-by-student and cohort-by-cohort to determine what may have been taught differently in the first session of remote, what targeted skills need to be worked on for each student, and how to provide the support, e.g., CAVBlock. Another setting that will be offered, at no cost to the students, is the PSAT prep course. This will allow all students the opportunity to prep for the SAT in the spring or over the summer. The Administration is looking to do it in a fashion whereby students are only required to take math and not both the math and ELA SAT prep.

Grade 12 students took what would have been their 11th grade assessment - school day SAT. It was very stable. A little lower than years prior, but very stable.

Vice Chairman Solon spoke of concern he would have with the results of tests taken after giving prep classes, being used to compare results to other years. We take pride in that we do not teach to the test although the tests identify trends. We have a certain obligation to making our students competitive in this altered universe. He is not necessarily opposed to providing the prep class but is aware of data that shows prep classes may improve your scores, but do not necessarily improve whether or not you are comprehending the material.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug responded that data would not be used at all. Being looked at is school day SAT of the entire grade level unless they opt out of taking the assessment. The opportunity for the prep classes would be if a student chose to, on their own, sign up for an optional SAT in the fall.

The interim assessment is but one measure but does allow for digging down into individual areas. It was a little more obvious in some of the elementary cohorts, e.g., fractions in grade 3 were covered when we were remote, and not surprisingly that grade level did not do well in fractions. What we need to understand is what it was about that and how we are addressing a 3rd grade skill, now in 4th grade, in a way that they are learning it, and we are not creating a gap. What will be really important is when we do the summative assessment in the springtime; want to see improvement in those targeted areas.

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Update

Superintendent Corey wished to recognize the amount of public participation in the meetings of the Advisory Committee. The Committee meets again tomorrow night, with a focus on review of the statement based on input provided.

The Committee has put in 50-80 hours. The work started off with a statement around being an inclusive community. This work is something school districts are required to do. One of the Committee members brought up the speech heard at graduation this year. What was said was "I encourage you not to just be tolerant but seek to understand other people. It is only then that they are willing to listen to your ideas." That really struck home because the statement came from one of our own students. He spoke of the diverse student body represented through the group that Principal Barnes meets with weekly. Those students have brought forth a number of pieces.

The desire is to ensure we are cultivating children who know how to debate and disagree but do so in a civil manner. Input was received from the public asking that the Committee revisit the definitions. The Committee felt it important to try to define terms for the communities of Hollis and Brookline. A visual piece was included regarding equity and equality and received both positive and negative input. Those who are visual learners were in favor and those who read text did not see the necessity. When looking at it, consideration is given to the diverse population being served.

The Committee is examining the last few paragraphs trying to balance out what is student free speech in regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion, but also getting people to understand that students do not have the same free speech inside the school that they have outside.

Looking at next steps, the Committee has identified two pieces;

1. The SAU #41 school districts will make diversity, equity, and inclusion a strategic priority by actively supporting such efforts.

That is underway with work being done on the Portrait of a Graduate and a number of initiatives such as that. It has been a slow process because of COVID, but it is still in the pipeline, and they believe it can be incorporated.

2. SAU #41 will review its policies and procedures relative to diversity, equity, and inclusion and release a plan to address its findings as a part of SAU #41's strategic five-year plan to be developed and voted on by the school boards in 2021.

A member of the Committee reviewed existing policies and procedures and found them to be well done. That individual has stated he does not believe we need the resolution because we have all of the other pieces. Overall, the Committee believes the resolution to be a starting point identifying what the vision is. The Committee will bring back a statement at the Board's next meeting. The Board may decide to act on it or not, change it, etc. Eventually the Board would end up with something, and he and the Assistant Superintendents working with the Board would start to look at it through the lens of what does this mean in terms of professional development, curriculum, etc. The Committee is discussing four areas that would be incorporated in the Strategic Plan and providing action items and deliverables to bring back to the Board.

Member Stoll spoke of gratitude to the community and Committee stating this to be an important initiative and that she looks forward to seeing where it goes from here.

Member Whalen remarked she would normally think that putting a visual in would not be what we want; however, she found the example provided to be extremely powerful.

Member Williams stated her appreciation for the effort put forth. As written, she believes the definitions to be straightforward. But in conversations with parents, co-workers, and students, equity is the hardest one for people to understand. She stated appreciation for how the resolution is written and the visual aspect.

In terms of the resolution itself, she struggles. From her first school board meeting she made a commitment to never vote on something she did not fully understand, does not think is attainable or does not fully understand the cost of. Ms. Arthur's comments around the intent of a resolution provided some clarity. She wished to understand more how it would be put into action.

Vice Chairman Solon spoke of appreciating the evolution that has occurred through the work of the Committee. The expressions of this are clearly capturing a much more diverse population. He noted some of the speakers referred to this interchangeably as policy, and we need to be careful as this is not policy. He questioned what having this resolution would cause the Administration to do differently than if it were not in place.

Superintendent Corey responded the communities want to ensure we are acting on it and in what they consider to be a reasonable manner. He used the example of curriculum; if presenting something in history we need to make sure we are presenting multiple viewpoints so that we are teaching to all learners in the room. Sometimes as teachers we need to go back and reflect because our own bias can get in the way.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned how a resolution accomplishes that. Superintendent Corey responded, to him, what the resolution does is state, if the Board agrees, that we are moving forward to including this as a strategic

item in the Plan, and now we will say things like we will look at the K-6 curriculum to see what we offer and if we want certain benchmarks in.

Asked if those actions would not occur if the Board did not approve the resolution, Superintendent Corey stated if the Board did not approve the resolution the Administration would continue to take the actions because it is the right thing for the students. But, at the same time, when talking about funding with the Budget Committee he has always noted items that are included as part of the Strategic Plan as those that are supported by the boards and communities. If it is not something the Board can support as part of the Strategic Plan, that would bring into question the budget argument on a yearly basis.

Vice Chairman Solon stated concern with putting effort into a vehicle that has no standing. It is a nice gesture, and he does not know that he opposes it as a gesture, but it really bothers him that so much work is being done on something that has no teeth, in some ways is a duplication of law and in other cases gives people a way to say what do you mean we are not doing anything; we passed a resolution.

In its current form, it is an SAU resolution. He questioned if it is anticipated to remain an SAU resolution or if it would be evaluated by each district and was told the expectation is that each district would evaluate it on their own.

Superintendent Corey commented when the discussions started, that exact question about the teeth of a resolution was asked as there were committee members who felt the work needed to go in a different direction. His feeling was it was brought forward by a group of citizens to a board and it was important that we recognize community voice and do something about that. He does not know if there would be community understanding that what was brought forward was being addressed were the district to just go on to our work.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned if new policy is needed. He does not believe the resolution is expressing anything that has not been expressed in the past, and not been acted upon. He does not see language in the resolution about hiring policies, but believes that needs to be addressed, the history books we use, how we recruit teachers, their backgrounds, etc. He is concerned about the feel-good nature of the resolution without anything that needs to be done and cannot be done through a resolution.

... recording malfunctioned...

- FY22 Budget Update – Draft Warrant

The Board reviewed the draft Warrant (copy included with [agenda](#) packet).

- Facilities Update on 4 Lund Lane

During its recent meeting, the Hollis School Board reflected on the SAU renovation project deciding to put the project on hold, at this time. It is likely that discussion will continue at the SAU41 Governing Board level in the February or May timeframe.

- Articles of Agreement/Policy Committee Update

Vice Chairman Solon noted the proposed amendments include deletion of Article 4, which states: “The Hollis/Brookline Cooperative School District shall lease the Hollis High School “White Building” and the Hollis Junior High School from the Hollis School District upon such terms and conditions as the Cooperative School Board negotiates and determines to be in the best interests of the Cooperative School District. The

Hollis/Brookline Cooperative School District shall acquire, at no further cost, the existing land, building, and contents comprising that portion of the Hollis AREA High School initially constructed in 1962, including subsequent additions.”

Also proposed to be deleted is Article 13, which states: “It will be the responsibility of the Cooperative School Board to plan a minimum of two joint meetings per year with the Hollis and Brookline School Boards for the purpose of discussing issues of mutual interest.” This has not been practiced in recent history. Vice Chairman Solon suggested either the Board conduct the meetings or look to remove the language.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock questioned the need for term “year ending” language in Article 2. Vice Chairman Solon stated the need to identify the term of each of the two positions in the Hollis School District.

The article would also state: “Effective with the election of 2021”. It was felt it would be less confusing to the reader to have current dates identified.

Member Brown stated the desire for additional discussion of the proposed change.

Superintendent Corey suggested a legal opinion on how to best word the warrant article and approach it during the public hearing. He believes it could be accomplished in a few ways; there is a regularly scheduled meeting still to come; it can come before the Board for further discussion next month. It could become a warrant article and be included as part of the public hearing. If the will of the Board, a Zoom meeting could be conducted.

Vice Chairman Solon stated the desire to be for the Board to authorize inclusion of a warrant article seeking to make the changes noted on the marked-up version attached with the agenda.

Member Brown agreed stating she does not believe the desire would be to have Articles of Agreement out there that we know we are not complying with. To the extent that we can clean it up and do it relatively easily, she would like to see that done.

The Warrant Article without the document is the consideration. Vice Chairman Solon commented if in agreement tonight, the document could be reviewed by legal. He was looking to see if the Board wished to have it as a warrant article in which case, the necessary steps could be taken.

DELIBERATIONS

Chairman Deurloo Babcock noted the Policy Committee has reviewed the advertising policy. It was reviewed recently and is being complied with.

Member Williams is working on the concussion policy. The policy has a significant amount of detail, and there are new suggestions from the NHSBA. Our policy is quite lengthy and yet quite different from the recommended policy. It may be that a total replacement is recommended. Member Williams is working with multiple individuals within the District, e.g., nurses, athletics.

The committee is also working on community use of school buildings. Attorney O’Shaughnessy is reviewing the policy as it includes a lengthy list of rules and regulations.

Member VanCoughnette’s electronic participation resumed.

- To see what action the Board will take regarding **Policy IKC** – Class Rank
1st Reading; 10-21-20

2nd Reading 11-18-20 (as amended)

3rd Reading 12-9-20 (as amended)

Given its fourth reading;

Chairman Deurloo Babcock noted the Policy Committee is made up of the two Principals, she and Members Whalen and Williams. The most important piece to the Policy Committee is the elimination of announcing the top 10. That was an issue of importance from the Instructional Practices Steering Committee. The Top 10 committee voted 11-1 to remove it. That was the language that was the focus of those two committees and has been the focus of the Policy Committee. The sticking point is clearly the inclusion of an exception related to service academies. Committee members feel strongly that is what was there, and it was not part of the committee discussions.

There were questions at the last meeting related to the statement “Academic achievement will be recognized at graduation as per the procedures outlined in the Hollis Brookline High School Program of Studies.” The Committee discussed removing that statement or keeping it as academic achievement and not putting it in the Program of Studies. Since the Program of Studies is an electronic document, this language can be easily added.

Principal Barnes has provided the Board with information on what a Latin Honor program would look like. The Instructional Practices Committee met regarding this in February of 2020 and came up with these thresholds to meet to be recognized in some capacity at graduation. This does not mean name called, it means recognition in the program, the cords. The highest honor would be Summa Cum Laude, which would be a student who attained a 4.2 GPA and above. The reason for that number is that a GPA of a 4.33 would be an A+ in every single class that the student has taken for 4 years, but that can be achieved without any weighting. You do not need to take a weighted class to get a 4.33. The desire was for this to be attainable in any situation. The next level down would be a Magna Cum Laude at 4.0, and then Cum Laude at 3.8.

In order to become a National Honor Society student, a 3.7 is required. This is a little bit higher than the National Honor Society because we want to make this a goal and achievement. The reason this system works for the Policy Committee is because a student would not be competing against another, but rather reaching for their best effort. It is still focused on grades, but it gives people an opportunity to push themselves. The reason for putting it in the Program of Studies and not in policy is we can see how it works, and the results.

Vice Chairman Solon noted a request at the last meeting from some members for additional information around what the service academies require. Chairman Deurloo Babcock was uncertain if additional work was done in that area. Member Williams remarked it was subjective depending on the individual school representative asked. The answer was mixed.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock remarked the policy has been on the Board’s agenda for months. The Board has received a few emails on the matter, and in terms of public input, the Board has heard from more people looking for the exception for the service academies than those who are not. However, we have not heard from many who wish for the top 10 to remain.

**MOTION BY MEMBER WILLIAMS TO ACCEPT THE FOURTH READING AND ADOPT
POLICY IKC – CLASS RANK
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER STOLL**

ON THE QUESTION

Member Williams commented she does not want that exception in the policy but feels so strongly about moving forward with the revised policy that she will support it.

Member Whalen stated she feels strongly about leaving the language in the policy. She also feels strongly about removing the top 10 language. She likes the Latin Honor System and supports including that in the Program of Studies. The biggest reason behind making the change is the desire to not hinder students, and it was felt the top 10 was causing harm. The exception has been in place for 6 years. Principal Barnes has stated it has not been misused. Those who apply to the academies have likely made plans many years in advance. She would not want to risk harming those students. She would not want an instance where a student's application is compared to another and because that information is on one form and not the other, the application is overlooked. We would not have any way of knowing if that was the reason a student was passed on or if they simply were not the right candidate. She is not willing to take that chance particularly when having that exception in place has not proven harmful.

The Board has been given information that other schools do not rank and are getting their students into the service academies, but we do not know what that means, e.g., they do not rank unless asked. Because we, as a district, strictly follow the language of our policies, she would not want to make a change that removes that language.

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

Yea: Krista Whalen, Holly Deurloo Babcock, Tom Solon, Elizabeth Brown, Beth Janine Williams, Kate Stoll

6

Nay: Cindy VanCoughnett

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MOTION CARRIED

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the subject matter of the non-public session

**MOTION BY MEMBER WILLIAMS TO ACCEPT THE SUPERINTENENT'S RECOMMENDATION
THAT TIM GIRZONE BE APPOINTED AS THE PRINCIPAL OF THE HOLLIS BROOKLINE HIGH
SCHOOL EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2021
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER STOLL**

ON THE QUESTION

Vice Chairman Solon remarked although the word appointment is being used, the normal hiring process was undertaken in which Mr. Girzone emerged as the candidate of choice.

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

Yea: Krista Whalen, Cindy VanCoughnett, Holly Deurloo Babcock, Tom Solon, Beth Janine Williams,
Elizabeth Brown, Kate Stoll

7

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

**MOTION BY MEMBER WILLIAMS TO APPROVE THE SUPERINTENDENT'S
RECOMMENDATION TO EXTEND LEAVE TO A COOP EMPLOYEE
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER STOLL**

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

Yea: Krista Whalen, Cindy VanCoughnett, Holly Deurloo Babcock, Tom Solon, Beth Janine Williams,
Elizabeth Brown, Kate Stoll

7

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the recommended amendments to the Articles of Agreement

**MOTION BY MEMBER SOLON TO PUT FORTH A WARRANT ARTICLE TO AMEND THE
ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT FOR THE HOLLIS BROOKLINE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL
DISTRICT AS PROPOSED IN THE AGENDA PACKET SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY DISTRICT
LEGAL COUNSEL
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS**

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

Yea: Krista Whalen, Cindy VanCoughnett, Holly Deurloo Babcock, Tom Solon, Beth Janine Williams,
Elizabeth Brown, Kate Stoll

7

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the tentative Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)

**MOTION BY MEMBER SOLON THAT THE HOLLIS BROOKLINE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL
BOARD RATIFY THE TENTATIVE AGREEMENT REACHED WITH THE HOLLIS EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION FOR A PROFESSIONAL STAFF THREE-YEAR CONTRACT FOR SCHOOL
YEARS 2021-2024
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS**

ON THE QUESTION

Vice Chairman Solon remarked a significant portion of the contract revision is intended to correct language that is either obsolete as it was put into the last contract on a one-time-only basis or to identify things that have not been found to be current practice.

Article V – Staff Evaluation; current contract has an exceptionally long, involved articulated process that we do not use. The new language refers to the professional growth master plan, which is detailed and is a State-approved plan. The language is also based on language being used in the Hollis School District. It moves the evaluation process description outside of the contract to what is essentially a living document that is also State approved. Language needing to be preserved for professional rights, etc., remains.

Article VIII – Compensation / Appendix B - Salary Adjustment; during each of the three years of the contract, those eligible will receive step increases in accordance with the table. The salary table itself will increase by 0.75% in the first year, 1.5% in year 2, and 1.75% in year 3. The dollar amounts associated with those increases are: \$228,316 in year one, \$294,057 in year two and \$330,369 in year three. Those amounts will be stated in the warrant article.

Article 8.3 – Salary Table Column (Lane) Changes; the change is primarily correcting language that caused confusion. The same is true for the language change from per diem to hourly rate because of the way we pay people for partial days during orientation.

One of the larger changes was article 10.6 section 2; taking what was learned in creating the sidebar agreement to better capture what is done with the middle school schedule and committing it to the contract itself. It is just massaging it to clarify the allocation of prep time, primarily.

The District would increase the rate paid (\$25/hour to \$35/hour) when a teacher gives up their off time during the day to substitute for another teacher, in the hope that we will be able to continue to keep schools in normal operation during times when staff members have to be out of the class.

The provisions of this agreement would be effective July 1, 2021 and would remain in full effect and binding until June 30, 2024. This language is consistent with the process of what is called sanbornization, which means that all terms of the contract are valid for all three years. This is the same process that has been employed in both the Hollis and Brookline elementary school districts. It does need to be acknowledged, it is not a required element in the State, and it is a negotiated element of the contract.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock commended the negotiating team for reaching a tentative agreement in what was a short timeline. Vice Chairman Solon remarked the team worked extremely hard on this. There was strong support from the Administration. Negotiations were conducted remotely. He thanked the members of the HEA negotiating team commenting they took the time to both explain their positions and to carefully consider ours.

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

Yea: Krista Whalen, Cindy VanCoughnett, Holly Deurloo Babcock, Tom Solon, Beth Janine Williams,
Elizabeth Brown, Kate Stoll

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Nay:

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MOTION CARRIED

REPORT OUT BY PROCESS OBSERVER

Vice Chairman Solon spoke of the extremely packed agenda, and of it being completed sooner than predicted. There was an important period of public input. The meeting was very well facilitated. He thanked Principal Girzone for representing his colleagues well during some critical discussion.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

**MOTION BY MEMBER WILLIAMS 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
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SOLON**

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

Yea: Krista Whalen, Cindy VanCoughnett, Holly Deurloo Babcock, Tom Solon, Beth Janine Williams, Elizabeth Brown, Kate Stoll

7

Nay:

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MOTION CARRIED

The Board went into non-public session at 9:28 p.m.

The Board came out of non-public session at 10:12 p.m.

Member Williams departed at 9:49 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY MEMBER WHALEN TO ADJOURN
SECONDED BY MEMBER STOLL
MOTION CARRIED
6-0-0**

The January 20, 2021 meeting of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board was adjourned at 10:12 p.m.

Date _____ Signed _____