

**HOLLIS BROOKLINE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BOARD
NOVEMBER 17, 2021
MEETING MINUTES**

A meeting of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board was conducted on Wednesday, November 17, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Hollis Brookline Middle School.

Holly Deurloo Babcock, Chairman, presided:

Members of the Board Present: Tom Solon, Vice Chairman (arrived at 6:06 p.m.)
 Beth Janine Williams, Secretary
 Elizabeth Brown
 Kate Stoll
 Cindy VanCoughnett
 Krista Whalen

Members of the Board Absent:

Also in Attendance: Gina Bergskaug, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
 Tim Girzone, Principal, Hollis Brookline High School
 Patrick West, Principal, Hollis Brookline Middle School
 Samantha Shepard, President, Student Body

APPOINTMENT OF PROCESS OBSERVER

Chairman Deurloo Babcock appointed Krista Whalen as Process Observer.

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

A request was made that the deliberative item concerning the E-Rate funding be postponed until the December meeting.

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

NOMINATIONS / RESIGNATIONS / CORRESPONDENCE

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted the district currently has openings for Paraprofessionals, Custodians, and Night Supervisors. Chairman Deurloo Babcock noted the Board has received a few emails regarding masks and requests to consider masks for the district.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District Special Meeting. [October 5, 2021](#)

MOTION BY MEMBER WILLIAMS TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WHALEN

MOTION CARRIED

6-0-1

Member VanCoughnett Abstained

Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board [October 14, 2021](#)

MOTION BY MEMBER WILLIAMS TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER STOLL
MOTION CARRIED

5-0-1

Member Brown Abstained

Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board [October 20, 2021](#)

The following amendments were offered:

- Page 10, Line 39; insert “was” following “that”
- Page 13, Line 5; replace “commented” with “commenting”
- Page 21, Line 18; the vote should be listed as “6-0-0”

MOTION BY MEMBER WILLIAMS TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WHALEN
MOTION CARRIED

5-0-1

Member Stoll Abstained

Chairman Deurloo Babcock stated “Before opening the floor for public comment, I would like to make a brief statement regarding the Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Vice Chair Solon and I have worked together on this statement, but we do not necessarily speak for the entire board. We do believe that many of the sentiments in this statement reflect the general thoughts of the board, but we cannot speak for all members. That being said, we both agree on the following:

For the last 30 years, the CDC has requested that their Youth Risk Behavior Survey, or YRBS, be completed by high school students on a national level every two years. This anonymous survey identifies trends in behavior which, in turn, is used to help allocate resources and to develop strategies to improve the wellbeing of young people in the U.S.

New Hampshire law requires schools to provide advance notice and an opt-out mechanism. The Hollis Brookline Coop District has a policy ILD which defines how the district will meet the requirements of the NH law. It is the policy, and not the law itself, that explicitly states how our district operates regarding administering the YRBS.

The YRBS would normally have been given last spring but was postponed until this fall due to COVID-19. This school year, in the midst of implementing our re-opening with fully in-person instruction, and with new administrators involved in the building, the survey was conducted without complying fully with policy ILD, and thereby was in violation of NH law.

When the district was made aware of the mistake, the administration, after consultation with the NH Dept. of Education, made the decision to void the survey and destroy all response sheets.

To address this for future events, administrators reviewed the policy to reinforce the understanding of how our district complies with NH law with regard to the YRBS. Also, in light of the increasing requirements of state

and federal regulations and the need for increased communication between the school districts and the community and with regulators, the SAU administration has proposed hiring a professional with the specific skills required to address these compliance and information communications.

There have been allegations made to the board, the administration, the DOE, and the public that this mistake was a violation of duty and public trust and calls made for the removal of administrators and officials responsible for the mistake. This reaction is misguided and a gross injustice against the people who have cared for our children and protected our community during the greatest threat many of us have experienced in our lifetime.

We are fortunate to have educational leadership who have accomplished what few others have done in our country. They have kept our schools open and our students relatively healthy, fed our children, and supported their needs well beyond the normal scope of the public school system. We have the best of the best in our district, at all levels. They have earned and deserve our respect and appreciation.

To expect perfection is unreasonable and the mistake being discussed harmed no one. Violation of policy is not to be ignored, but it must be viewed in context. On the whole, these individuals should be applauded for their performance, not chastised and certainly not vilified or threatened.

If people are truly interested in improving the process, they will support the addition of a communications professional who can take on these compliance tasks, freeing up our educators to do what they do best.

Finally, it is worth noting that the leaders and instigators of much of the recent criticism of, and allegations against, our district and its leadership originates outside our community. Why is that and what are their motives? Could this be part of the larger, well organized effort in the U.S. to defund public education?"

PUBLIC INPUT

Policy BEDH states: The primary purpose of School Board meetings is to conduct the business of the Board as it relates to school policies, programs and operations. The Board encourages residents to attend Board meetings so that they may become acquainted with the operation and programs of the schools. All official meetings of the Board shall be open to the press and public. However, the Board reserves the right to meet and to adjourn or recess a meeting at any time. The Board also reserves the right to enter non-public session at any time, in accordance with the provisions of RSA 91-A:3.

In order to assure that persons who wish to appear before the Board may be heard and, at the same time, it may conduct its meetings properly and efficiently, the Board adopts as policy the following procedures and rules pertaining to public participation at Board meetings:

- 1. The Board will set aside 15 minutes on the agenda for citizens to address the Board. This period may be extended by a majority vote of the Board.*
- 2. In order to comply with minute requirements of RSA 91-A:2, speakers must provide their name and address.*
- 3. Individual speakers will be allotted 3 minutes per person. Speakers may not relinquish allotted time to another speaker. For specific meetings and/or specific agenda items, the board may at the outset of the public comment period increase the individual time limit for all speakers.*

4. *Consistent with RSA 91-A:3, Policy BEDB, and the laws pertaining to student and family privacy rights, the Board will not place any matter on the public agenda that is to be properly discussed in a non-public session. Complaints regarding individual employees, personnel or students will be directed to the Superintendent in accord with Policies KE and KEB.*

5. *The Board reserves the right to limit public discussion at Board meetings to agenda items only. Members of the public who wish to speak at Board meetings regarding an agenda item are encouraged to contact the Board Chair prior to the Board meeting. Members of the public wishing to suggest an item of business should do so according to Policy BEDB.*

6. *All speakers are to conduct themselves in a civil manner. Obscene, libelous, defamatory or violent statements will be considered out of order and will not be tolerated. The Board Chair may terminate the speaker's privilege of address if the speaker does not follow this rule of order.*

Persons appearing before the Board are reminded that members of the Board are without authority to act independently as individuals in official matters. Questions shall be directed to the Board Chair."

Chairman Deurloo Babcock opened the floor for public input at 6:10 p.m.

Davi Peters, 33 Deacon Lane, Hollis

Has a child in the Hollis Brookline High School (HBHS) and one in the Hollis Brookline Middle School (HBMS). She believes the time is now to put a mask mandate in place. She has always and continues to have complete confidence in the Board, but feels a huge mistake was made at the start of the school year in not having a mask requirement.

Not only did we fail to put a mask requirement in place, but we failed to have a backup system. There is no guidance as to when it should come into play. What that has left us with is the situation where it is harder to make a change than to stay the path. At this point, some of the positivity rates in the State are the highest they have been during this pandemic. The case number on a daily basis has also been some of the highest numbers in the pandemic. Last year we had masks in place and a remote option. From the start of the year last year until now there were 2 cases reported at the HBHS and one reported at the HBMS. Now there are 29 cases already reported at the HBHS and 7 at the HBMS. If there was ever a time to put a mask requirement in place it is now. We are failing to protect our children and this community. Something needs to change.

Jeffrey Peters, 33 Deacon Lane, Hollis

He has gone through every email the SAU has sent out regarding health updates and correlated the data over the past two years. All of last year, in the entire SAU, we had a total of 69 cases of COVID in the schools, which averaged out to about .38 cases/day. This year so far, we have 96 cases in 48 days as opposed to 180 days last year or 1.87 case/day. That is a 390% increase over last year. If you break the COOP out of that, they had 44 cases all of last year for .2 cases/day and has had 36 this year for .7 cases/day, which is a 212% increase in just the COOP district. This is because we do not have social distancing in school as we did last year, and no mask mandate.

Last year the Hillsborough Superior Court stated masks are not a form of restraint so that is a spurious argument. The recommendation of the American Academy of Pediatrics is that every child over the age of 2 should be wearing a mask in school unless there is a medical or behavioral reason not to. On their policy guidance as two schools it states school policy should be regularly reviewed, especially school transmission data, and adjusted to align with new information about the pandemic. Administrators should refine approaches

when specific policies are not working. Our policies are not working. You need to refine the approach; you need to mandate masks in school to stop the spread.

The Delta variant is substantially more spreadable than the original Alpha variant. Mr. Peters stated he works with Cardiologists and every single doctor he works with is petrified of this not because of the short-term COVID issue, which is more a bad flu in most cases, but because of the long-term problems. There are so many cardiac issues that we are just now discovering that are related to COVID.

The public input period was declared closed at 6:15 p.m.

PRINCIPAL AND ATHLETIC REPORTS

Hollis Brookline Middle School (HMBS)

The Grade 7 Computer Science teacher has been working on a mobile app design project; the goal of the project is to design and code an iOS/Android mobile app that has an easy to use and navigate UI (user interface). Students were encouraged to create their own art and graphics for the games. A video presentation was provided (can be viewed [here](#) beginning at tape counter 16:00).

The Climbing Club began on November 2nd. Twenty-two students travel to Vertical Dreams in Nashua every Tuesday to learn about climbing knots, belay techniques, and general climbing safety.

A long-term substitute, Ms. Abby Ouellette, has been hired for the Art position. Ms. Ouellette has a BFA from MassArt in Boston and is a professional illustrator.

The 7th and 8th Grade Band Concert is scheduled for December 7th. The hope is to be able to allow for four tickets per student for the band concert and the Chorus concert planned for December 9th.

Athletic Coordinator Report

Tim Girzone, Principal, Hollis Brookline High School (HBHS) highlighted items included in the Athletic Coordinator's report, a copy of which was provided as part of the [agenda](#) packet.

Congratulations to both the Girls Soccer and Boys Cross Country teams on their 2021 Tri-County State Championships.

Winter sports are up and running.

Hollis Brookline High School

- Instructional Practices Committee

The Instructional Practices Steering Committee reconvened the prior day and reviewed the work of the sub-committees; Grading and Assessment, Weighted vs Unweighted, and Class Rank Top 10. The work of the Top 10 sub-committee resulted in policy change. The other sub-committees have reported out on the status of their work. With some refreshing of membership, given the pandemic and some turnover in staff, they will reconvene again before the end of this calendar year with an opportunity to then report back out to the Steering Committee in January.

There was a good healthy discussion about forming a sub-committee in place of the Top Ten Sub-committee. It will be formed in the coming days and stakeholders will be sought from all sections of our school community. That committee will explore the possibility of implementing an advisory period at the HBHS.

- Curriculum Materials Review

During the 2020-2021 school year at HBMS, a concern and objection to the reading of the book titled *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson was brought forward to administration. Consistent with policy KEC, after receiving this concern, the book was put before a Book Review Committee consisting of (8) eight educators from across the Co-op. This Book Review Committee sought to evaluate the book's strengths, areas of concern and to make recommendations to the principal on the book's place in the course. This Principal's report was presented to the Board at the October meeting. Questions were raised around options for alternative reading options. Some of the titles that would be available to students include *Pride and Prejudice*, *The Pearl*, *Johnny Tremain*, and *Animal Farm*. Because *Speak* has been the final book of the year, the curricular topics (e.g. figurative language, symbolism, theme) have already been covered when studying other books earlier in the year, and therefore, any one of these alternative books could provide a similar year-end review of these literary elements.

- Youth Risk Behavior Survey

On October 26, during CAV Block, the anonymous Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which HBHS has been participating in for several years, was administered. Our procedures require us to post the survey as well as notify families to allow anyone who wants to opt out to have that ability. Unfortunately, we failed to provide the required opt out email or post the survey. Based on not following our procedures we made the decision to not submit the anonymous surveys to the State. We will work closely with our administrative team to review our protocols to ensure they are being followed going forward. Since a complaint has been filed with the Department of Education, our School District Attorney has recommended our Superintendent hold onto the materials until the complaint is resolved.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock expressed gratitude for the diligence in reviewing the book and ensuring the concern was addressed. As a member of the Instructional Practices Steering Committee, she commented on having felt it was a very productive meeting the prior day, and that good decisions will be made moving forward.

Student Council

Samantha Shepard, President, Student Body, spoke of the successful Halloween Assembly, which took place on the turf field.

Moving forward with Spirit Week, they are working on making it more inclusive and fun. It has been stagnant for a while, and there is the desire to change it up a bit. Forms just went out to Student Council to vote on how it will look this year, e.g., recorded videos like last year or live performance skits. Dress up days will be changed, and discussions will occur on posters versus decorations, etc.

The Student Activities Committee is working on plans for a community cleanup for either the end of fall or towards spring for students to participate in.

DISCUSSION

- Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Discussion - round two draft budget

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted Round 2 of the budget review (typically 4 rounds) has completed. She reviewed the various categories of the budget and the items currently included. Under the heading of personnel, at the HBHS, being sought is the shifting of the cost of some of the positions, which were put in place this year utilizing ESSER funds, to the budget to maintain the higher level of support in school counseling and math. The 0.6 P.E. teacher position would be increased to a 1.0 Full Time Equivalent (FTE).

Also listed is a Social Worker that would be shared between the two buildings (1 FTE). Another position that was funded this year with ESSER funds is a Tech Specialist. The desire is to shift that cost slowly; fund half through ESSER and half through the operating budget. By doing so, the shift to the operating budget will not have as great an impact in a single year.

The NECC program that has been in place at the HBMS will move to the HBHS and with that, some personnel.

The draft budget notes a few increases in stipends and the shared positions (SAU wide) of an SAU directed Food Service Substitute and SAU Directed Instructional Substitute. The positions shared SAU-wide need to make it through all of the individual budgets before being put in place.

At the HBMS, being sought is a 504 Paraprofessional (differential pay).

Under the heading of Academics, identified are textbook purchases (Algebra II and AP World History; rotation cycle) and a few online resources.

Additional academic needs include piano repairs, sewing machine tables, etc. At the HBMS, some of the repairs that are identified include maintenance of the kiln, classroom chairs, Tech. Ed. equipment inspection, etc.

Under the heading of new computer equipment, listed are monitors in the library. Under the heading of replacement computer equipment, listed are staff laptops (annual replacement cycle), projectors, Redcat Audio System; best practice for teacher to utilize Redcat microphone system so that any student, regardless of their location, can hear the voice of the teacher. Smartboards are outdated and will be replaced with an interactive flat panel (1 replaces whiteboard and projector).

Under the heading of shared services/software are items that are shared between all of the buildings within the SAU and include a facilities truck and trailer. With the addition of the position of Facilities Director the need to move parts of computers, tables, chairs, and other furniture has been highlighted. The Facilities Director has been utilizing his personal vehicle and trailer in lieu of renting from U-Haul. Consideration is being given to the purchase or lease of a facilities truck and trailer.

Also being sought is the purchase of a storage container for IT equipment. The equipment is stored in preparation for recycling (yearly).

The IV Cloud Hosting is a shift for increased cybersecurity. The Frontline maximization is the software used for substitutes, job applications, professional growth, teacher observation, etc.

Under the heading of safety issues, being considered is interior and exterior door rekeying at the HBHS and bollards at both buildings (prevent someone from driving into the front of the building).

Under the heading of athletics are wrestling mats and the final set of volleyball poles (may move to the athletic trust fund) at the HBHS.

Under facilities/maintenance, for the HBHS, consideration is being given to prepping the surface of the dirt lot. Paving would be in FY24 or FY25 (needs a year of preparation and settling properly). Also included are HVAC upgrades, storage container for tables and chairs, interior and exterior doors (done in phases), FACS kitchen countertops, A/C & Electrical in Computer Science classroom, windows blinds, screens and seals (Phase IV), boiler jacket replacements, and gym inspection.

At the HBMS, window replacement (Phase III), interior and exterior lighting, computer room renovation (flooring/electrical/tables), MPR tables/chairs (Phase IV), paving of driveway section, flooring for Room 220, re-tile at base of library, gym inspections, and diesel pump maintenance.

Should the district move forward with the lease energy project, some of those items may be shifted to that project.

At this point in the review process, the total reflects an increase of \$1,112,341 or 4.56%. Guidance has been provided by the Budget Committee. The Administration is looking to identify \$145,000 worth of reductions.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned the Redcat audio system asking if it is now considered that teachers cannot speak loud or clear enough for an entire classroom to hear. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug remarked it is best practice. In some districts, they are utilized by every teacher so that they can utilize their regular/calm level of speaking but can be heard from all parts of the room equally. It also distinguishes between background noise and the instructions of the teacher. Rather than an in and out should the teacher turn their head, students hear the same volume level regardless of the direction. Rather than focus the use on a particular student need, it is best practice to utilize for all students.

Vice Chairman Solon remarked he is not particularly comfortable with setting up a system that relies on amplification in a normal sized room both in terms of teaching people how to speak clearly and be understood or the issue of dependence on technology and its potential failure and upkeep. The cost is the least of his concerns. It baffles him that all of a sudden what has been going on for centuries of a person being able to project to an audience is now considered an unreasonable expectation. He can understand if an environment where one or more parties has an identified impairment, but outside of that he questions whether it is an aid or a potential intrusion or crutch.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug responded we have been operating a certain way for ages. Our other two districts have been operating in a different way. She spoke of the way education has transformed over the past 100 years; it is not a teacher in one location speaking to students who are not moving and sitting directly staring at all times. There is group work and students actively moving all of which creates a different level of background noise. To distinguish between the group conversing and when there are instructions being provided, this is useful. She just completed a professional reading where the idea is you work better when you are standing and working on a vertical surface, which then prevents your voice from projecting appropriately if there are others standing in the way of the projection of the voice. There have been a lot of changes. Our students and many of our teachers are used to hearing it this way. We have been using them for years in here,

but in targeted classrooms. Rather than identifying where those should be available, based on a particular need, if they are available universally it protects the privacy and ends up being best practice for all students.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned if it is the expectation that it will be an option everywhere or that it will be the normal and was told it would be the norm.

Member Williams spoke of students who have benefited from that in the elementary district and one thing they have commented on is being able to hear things. We are using more fans, there is more concern about air circulation, etc., and it is harder to hear. As we continue to move forward with changes, e.g., looking at ways to increase airflow, that really impacts things.

Vice Chairman Solon remarked if HVAC is to the point where it is inhibiting communications you have a larger concern, which is background noise that has serious medical implications.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned if the cost identified for the facilities truck and trailer is an apportioned amount of the cost and was told it is. Asked if it is being budgeted as an expense in a single year or a recurring expense, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the cost identified is for a purchase in a single year. Also being considered is leasing.

- SAU Job Description; Communication and Compliance Position - Informational

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug spoke of the request for additional specifics for the proposed position. The administration started with bulleted tasks that would be appropriate with this position and then did some work looking at job descriptions for similar positions in other districts (NH and MA).

Feedback has been received from the other district boards and is being integrated in advance of presentation to the SAU 41 Governing Board.

Vice Chairman Solon commented on the section titled knowledge, skills and abilities; familiarity with a variety of communication outlets had been described but does not appear to be included in the description. It may be that some level of certification should be sought in an area such as Adobe.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock questioned the ability to obtain an individual possessing all of the skills identified, and if the budget would attract such an individual. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug commented she had originally thought the salary would be different, but after conducting some research it appears we are in line with what would be expected.

- Lease Committee Update

The Lease Committee was formed by the SAU 41 Governing Board several months ago. Membership includes Robert Mann, Hollis School Board, Karen Jew, Brookline School Board, and Elizabeth Brown, COOP School Board.

Member Brown stated the first meeting was more of an exploration of the purpose of the committee. There had been a bond proposal at the Hollis School District to address renovations to the barn at the SAU building, which would have provided 9 additional offices, conference room space, etc. The bond was taken off the ballot in 2020 having not been noticed properly (error by newspaper).

There was concern from the Hollis district and a warrant that would have been advisory, where if there was going to be some sort of an expansion renovation and a bond that Hollis would take on, that the other districts in the SAU were committed to staying in that space for some extended period of time.

Coming into that first meeting they were crammed into the corner of the Superintendent's office as the only space available in the SAU building, and realized it is really not an appropriate meeting space for the SAU. The next thing that was imminently clear was an uncertainty if that is the right space, there was an amount of uncertainty of the facts, e.g., cost of rent. There was a good deal of discussion around what is a reasonable rental cost. There had been reliance on the analysis that had been done by the committee that had looked at renovating the barn. They had come up with some really high market values for what they considered appropriate rent for that space.

Ms. Jew has the ability to work with an appraiser and has real estate background as does Ms. Brown. In discussions with Mr. Mann and the Superintendent they came to realize they did not have enough facts to make any good analysis and needed to bring an expert in. They spent some weeks offline trying to determine who that should be. What they needed was a commercial broker to come in and say if this building were going to be leased in a third party situation what the market rent would be. They were able to get the services of Deane Navaroli, Principal, William & Reeves. He was willing to donate his time, and provided the report included with the agenda packet. His work was very thorough and made the work of the committee much easier.

What the report pointed out was the building is probably worth a whole lot more to Hollis were it to be sold than if used as an SAU administrative building. It is definitely not the highest and best use and is not really appropriate space. There are obvious issues with the building. There are obvious issues with an Assistant Superintendent whose office shares a wall with the bathroom and the only bathroom on the floor. You do not have to spend much time in there to realize it is not professional space. We are asking professionals to do a very difficult job in space that is not appropriate for what it is being used for.

Mr. Navaroli provided a rental price per square foot of \$7 - \$7.85. There is leasable space, according to the tax card, of 3,700 sq ft. Market rent is between \$25,900 and \$29,045. We are paying \$8,000/district or \$24,000. There has been a perception, especially in Hollis, that they were providing a bargain. After reading this report they realized the SAU was receiving somewhere in the area of a 10% reduction in cost.

The committee waited for the report before meeting again. The decision that resulted was that this is not good education space, and if going to make a commitment we want space that is built for this purpose.

The recommendation of the Superintendent is that we are on the heels of space issues at the Hollis elementary district, and it may be a much better plan for Hollis to build what would be considered an early education center; preschool/kindergarten center and with that construction build office space that is designated to the SAU administrative staff. All of the additional costs that have to be considered, e.g., heat, maintenance, roof, plowing, could be addressed as a single space. That is the 2-3 year plan at this point.

The plan is to put together a committee that will include community members, representatives from each of the school boards, etc. Hopefully, we will end up with a modern space that is usable for our staff. Member Brown commented the biggest downside she had coming out of this was that we are leaving our administrative staff where they are for the time being.

There will not be any lease negotiated at this time. The way we pay rent on an annual basis to Hollis has worked in the past and will continue. If the bond fails and that does not go through there will have to be sort of a different analysis in a couple of years.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned if the district is currently committed to additional increases in rent from the prior escalation process. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug spoke of the three-year escalation plan, which concluded several years ago. The rental cost has not been increased since.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock stated her assumption the Hollis School District would seek some sort of commitment from the other districts were they to pursue a bond. Member Brown stated her belief there has to be some sort of commitment. The commitment they were asking for financially was not fair to the sending districts as we were going to be paying the full value of the bond and then they were going to end up with a building that was now going to be increased in value by the fact that it had been renovated, and two other districts had paid 2/3 of the cost of that. That is off the table, but yes there will have to be some sort of commitment.

There are a lot of ways that can be worked out and issues that can be addressed in committee as they are looking to determine what building space, financial arrangement, and certainty we need to have.

Asked if the committee would be a sub-committee formed by the SAU 41 Governing Board, Member Brown stated that to be her understanding.

DELIBERATIONS

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the acceptance of 13 Dell laptop computers donated by Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU)

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) cycles through their computers on a three-year cycle. A parent in the district having a connection to SNHU came forward and asked if we wanted to be considered as a beneficiary of some of those computers. The district reviewed the potential donation of the 13 laptops. They were deemed quite nice and beneficial to our fleet. As a result, the district expressed an interest in being part of the donation cycle.

It is difficult to determine an exact value as the computers are 3 years old, but the belief is that the value is likely over the \$5,000 threshold requiring Board approval.

**MOTION BY MEMBER SOLON TO ACCEPT, WITH GRATITUDE, A DONATION FROM SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE UNIVERSITY IN THE FORM OF 13 DELL LAPTOPS HAVING AN ESTIMATED VALUE OF FIVE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED SIXTY DOLLARS (\$5,160)
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS**

ON THE QUESTION

The Board expressed its gratitude to the parent who came forward and SNHU for the donation.

MOTION CARRIED

7-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the salary increase proposed for the Recording Secretary

**MOTION BY MEMBER WILLIAMS TO APPROVE THE SUPERINTENDENT'S
RECOMMENDATION FOR RATE INCREASE TO TWENTY THREE DOLLARS (\$23.00) HOUR
FOR THE RECORDING SECRETARY
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SOLON**

ON THE QUESTION

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the requested increase coincides with the CPI, average of 3% a year for 5 years as it has been 5 years since the last increase.

MOTION CARRIED

7-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the Fiscal Year 2023 budget calendar

Public Hearing set for February 2, 2022 with a snow date of February 3, 2022.

School District Meeting scheduled for March 15, 2022 and March 16, 2022 (if needed) with a snow date of March 17, 2022.

Member Whalen questioned why the COOP's public hearing occurs prior to that of the Hollis School District, but the Hollis district's annual meeting occurs prior to that of the COOP.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock questioned if it is a function of rotating which meeting occurs first. It does feel as if the COOP School District is always second. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug spoke of the difficulties of last year and her belief that may have altered the pattern that had been followed.

Noted were the legal requirements around the setting of the dates, e.g., public hearing has to be conducted no later than 25 days before the district meeting. The proposed calendar meets the legal requirements.

Vice Chairman Solon asked if the Towns have set their dates and suggested, if desired, the COOP could move its public hearing to the week prior to that of the Hollis School District. Chairman Deurloo Babcock was hesitant to make a change to the calendar without having all of the necessary information at hand. She was pleased with the middle of March as a district meeting date.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted the calendar has been approved by the Hollis School Board. The Brookline School District's Deliberative Session is the 7th. Between the two other districts that week would be utilized. By not accepting the first week of February as a date, there is not an option for a public hearing date where administrators could attend. Vice Chairman Solon questioned the 17th. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug questioned if that would cause a conflict with the ability to hold public hearings for petition warrant articles. Legal counsel developed the calendar.

**MOTION BY MEMBER WILLIAMS TO APPROVE THE FY23 BUDGET CALENDAR AS
PRESENTED**

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER VANCOUGHNETT

MOTION CARRIED

6-1-0

Member Solon voted in opposition

- To see what action the Board will take regarding policy **GBEC** - Drug Free Workplace/Drug Free Schools

MOTION BY MEMBER WILLIAMS TO RESCIND POLICY GBEC – DRUG FREE WORKPLACE / DRUG FREE SCHOOLS

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SOLON

ON THE QUESTION

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted there are multiple policies, and the recommendation is that these policies should be combined. Later on the agenda is the first reading of policy ADB/GBEC - Drug Free Workplace & Drug Free Schools. When going through a federal audit this is one of the policies the auditors were looking to ensure is up-to-date and combined.

Asked, she stated the policies were essentially the same; one has been updated more so than the other. They started off as the same policy listed twice. There is a new legal requirement making them both out of date. A change needs to be made regardless of the combining of the two.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned if there is an issue if rescinding one policy before approving the other.

MOTION BY MEMBER BROWN TO TABLE POLICY GBEC UNTIL APPROVAL OF POLICY ADB/GBEC

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER STOLL

MOTION CARRIED

7-0-0

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug commented the principals have looked at a number of these type of policies. The recommendation is to rescind policy GBEC and replace ADB (has not been updated since 2004) with ADB/GBEC, which has the required updates.

Vice Chairman Solon suggested the Board could ultimately put forth a single motion to replace policies ADB and GBEC with ADB\GBEC.

- To see what action the Board will take regarding policy **DAF** – Administration of Federal Grant Funds
Given its 1st Reading;

MOTION BY MEMBER SOLON TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY DAF – ADMINISTRATION OF FEDERAL GRANT FUNDS, AS PRESENTED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS

ON THE QUESTION

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug remarked when agreeing to the Federal Assurances we are saying, as a Board, that she and the Superintendent are doing all of the required actions. There were changes to the law requiring amendments to the policy.

Specifically, in section DAF-1, F – Period of Performance, the percentage of Free and Reduced Lunch applications is part of the formula for the grant. This year and last because lunches were at no cost, families were not necessarily completing the applications. Rather than providing the formula driven allocations, being

provided is a sum of money. Grant applications will be uploaded, and at some point in the future, the remaining amount of the allocation will be provided. For some districts that receive a good deal of funding, this became a hardship as they have full positions that are grant funded by Title I funds for example. You cannot offer a contract for the year if you do not actually have the allocation. One of the amendments put in was that if it is an expense such as a math specialist under Title I funds, which would be an approvable expense, you can offer a contract. Other changes are identified under sections DAF-3, H – Additional requirements for Procurement Contracts Using Federal Funds and DAF-10, B-Grant Closeout Requirements.

Asked, who oversees and administers compliance with the policy, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated she writes the grant and administers the funds. She and the Business Administrator work together for the procurement and contracts. The Business Administrator completes the monthly reports. When an audit is done, it falls on several members of the Administration to gather the required information.

Vice Chairman Solon noted some of the clauses put in regarding procurement almost require a technical specialist. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug remarked because the district does not receive a great deal of this funding, it either falls under a threshold where some of the requirements do not apply based on the type of things grants are written for. Vice Chairman Solon stated concern with the overtaxing of resources to comply with the requirements. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the Federal Government audited the State of New Hampshire a few years back and the State was found to not be as tight with the requirements. A lot of changes took place at the State level that were pushed down to the district. Grant writing has become a huge chore. We have access to Title I funds in the COOP district, but the amount of funds that could be gained do not justify the level of work required. We no longer access them. There has been discussion of at what point it becomes more costly to accept that minimum threshold we could obtain versus the time required to apply.

MOTION CARRIED

7-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding policy - **ADB/GBEC** - Drug Free Workplace & Drug Free Schools

Given its 1st Reading;

MOTION BY MEMBER WILLIAMS TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY ADB/GBEC – DRUG FREE WORKPLACE & DRUG FREE SCHOOLS, AS PRESENTED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER STOLL

ON THE QUESTION

This policy would replace policy ADB, in its entirety. Noted was an error with the version provided with the agenda; the second paragraph under section C- Drug-Free School Zone, should be removed. It will be removed prior to the second reading.

The policy has been updated to cover issues legally required to be included such as the medical marijuana card.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned if there is existing overlap between the individual policies ADB and GBEC. Member Brown stated they were basically identical. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug added they were both for workplace, but G policies reference employees in a school. This policy does not affect students. Policies impacting students are J policies.

MOTION CARRIED

7-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding policy **BCB** - Board Member Conflict of Interest
 - 1st reading: October 20, 2021 (as amended)

Given its 2nd reading;

**MOTION BY MEMBER WILLIAMS TO ACCEPT THE SECOND READING OF POLICY BCB – BOARD MEMBER CONFLICT OF INTEREST, AS AMENDED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SOLON**

ON THE QUESTION

The amendment is the inclusion of new language under #4: “A Board member’s volunteering within the district shall be limited to participation in their child’s/children’s classes or activities and must be opportunities open to other parents/guardian, or by administration requests for volunteers specifically to board members.”

There was conversation at the Policy Committee meeting as to whether or not things like the PTSA and Booster Club would be allowed. The conclusion of the Policy Committee was that they would not be allowed.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock stated her belief Booster Club is your child’s activity and PTSA is the child’s classroom.

Member Williams noted the way the language is written, it implies it would be permitted.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock spoke of the ability to amend the language and questioned the will of the Board. Vice Chairman Solon remarked it is unclear to him that involvement in those organizations is equivalent to volunteering in the schools. Member Stoll stated agreement commenting if volunteering on the PTSA you are not in the school every day where you are interacting with staff and administration. Vice Chairman Solon remarked it is participating in an organization that happens to be affiliated with the school. He does not see PTSA and Booster Club as being volunteering in the school.

Member Brown remarked what was being discussed at the meeting was a specific activity that required a presence of a volunteer over the better part of a school day. The example that was given was the luncheon that happened this last week. The view was expressed that it would not be appropriate for School Board members to be the one(s) volunteering in the school all day. That is sort of the line; serving that meal is not a child’s classroom, the child is not being invited to lunch, the child is not part of that activity.

Perhaps part of what needs to happen is determine the consensus of the Board and then the language can be crafted for the 3rd reading. Vice Chairman Solon commented when he proposed language it was not his intent to restrict all involvement in parent organizations such as the Booster Club. If it is felt the current proposed language would restrict those type of activities, he would like to see that addressed.

Member Williams commented on the language “and must be opportunities open to other parents/guardian” stating if it is available to other parents/guardian it is not necessarily linking it to your child’s classroom specifically. That is why she felt the way the language is written it may be restricting things like Booster Club. Vice Chairman Solon noted no child participates in Booster Club or PTSA. Member Williams commented they benefit from it. Vice Chairman Solon stated he added the language “and” because he believes both conditions need to exist to be in the room. What he was seeking to avoid was a situation where only Board members are being put into classrooms without there being a specific need that the high-level administration has sanctioned.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug questioned if the comma should be removed in front of “and”. Vice Chairman Solon stated agreement.

Member Whalen stated her opinion Board members should not be paid by the district. She is concerned if Board members are in the schools where there could be influence somewhere.

Vice Chairman Solon stated his belief the difference is in their opinion on volunteering. He is of the opinion that if you become a Board member that carries with it a certain requirement of some level of disassociation to maintain both the reality and appearance of objectivity for the work that we do. Member Whalen remarked she shares the belief, but still struggles. Chairman Deurloo Babcock commented if not allowing volunteering, then you cannot work concession stands at your child’s games, you cannot volunteer to chaperone on the ski team bus, etc. The language provided allows for those kinds of things. That is good. Were it that you could not do any of those she is uncertain how she would view it as she believes her children benefit from her involvement.

Vice Chairman Solon suggested the difference could be Board members volunteering within the buildings. Chairman Deurloo Babcock responded that becomes tricky because what if you want to put together the potluck for the volleyball dinner that occurs in the building, etc. She is acceptable to the language as it is believing it provides a boundary. She suggested it go back to the Policy Committee. She believes there is not the desire to limit involvement in external organizations, e.g., PTSA, Booster Club. The Board stated agreement. Vice Chairman Solon added he shares the sentiment Member Brown expressed that when those organizations bring a parent into the school there is the potential the line could be crossed depending on the circumstances.

Member Brown remarked it is about keeping a professional division between our roles inside the building. Those relationships that may happen outside the building are organic and different. You cannot control those. At one point we had 4 board members that lived within 6 houses of each other and covered 3 different boards. You cannot control some of those things that happen within the community but when you come into the building you should be one of two things, either mom or there as a school board member. The relationship with the teachers needs to fall into one of those two categories.

MOTION CARRIED

7-0-0

REPORT OUT BY PROCESS OBSERVER

Member Whalen remarked the meeting ran efficiently and included good discussion.

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 AND RSA 91-A:3, II (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 WILLIAMS

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

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

7

Nay:

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MOTION CARRIED

Member Williams departed at 7:50 p.m.

The Board went into non-public session at 7:50 p.m.

The Board came out of non-public session at 8:08 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY MEMBER VANCOUGHNETT TO ADJOURN

SECONDED BY MEMBER WHALEN

MOTION CARRIED

6-0-0

The November 17, 2021, meeting of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Date _____

Signed _____