

**BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD  
FEBRUARY 22, 2023  
MEETING MINUTES**

A meeting of the Brookline School Board was conducted on Wednesday, February 22, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the Captain Samuel Douglass Academy.

Kenneth Haag, Chairman, presided:

Members of the School Board Present: Karen Jew, Vice Chairman  
Colleen Micavich, Secretary  
Alison Marsano  
Kelly Zakar

Members of the School Board Absent:

Also in Attendance: Andrew Corey, Superintendent  
Gina Bergskaug, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction  
Daniel Molinari, Principal, Richard Maghakian Memorial School  
Patricia Bouley, Principal, Captain Samuel Douglass Academy

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**AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS**

Chairman Haag noted the meeting would adjourn by 7:00 p.m. given the current weather conditions and closure of the school facility.

Superintendent Corey suggested the discussion around the Special Education Trust be delayed as it will be a decision that the Board seated for the next term would have to make.

**CORRESPONDENCE / RESIGNATIONS / RETIREMENTS / NOMINATIONS**

Work is being finalized on the long-term substitute in the area of Guidance at the Captain Samuel Douglass Academy (CSDA). The Superintendent and the Director of Student Services will update the Board in March regarding a transition for a special education administrator. The transition of that individual will start during the current school year and the individual would be formally welcomed to the full-time position in July.

Chairman Haag commented on this being the last meeting for members Jew and Marsano. He thanked them for their years of service to the students and community-at-large.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Jt. Mtg.** Brookline School Board/Brookline Finance Committee . . . . . [January 11, 2023](#)

*The following amendments were offered:*

Page 1, Line 28; replace “belief” with “believe”

1 Page 7, Line 2; correct the spelling of “the”  
2 Page 13, Line 31; replace “Board” with “Boards”

3  
4 **MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED**  
5 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW**  
6 **MOTION CARRIED**  
7 **5-0-0**

8  
9 Brookline School Board – **Public Hearing** ..... [January 11, 2023](#)

10  
11 *The following amendments were offered:*

12  
13 Page 2, Line 38; replace “of” with “or”  
14 Page 5, Line 2; replace “F24” with “FY24”

15  
16 **MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED**  
17 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MARSANO**  
18 **MOTION CARRIED**  
19 **5-0-0**

20  
21 **Special** Brookline School Board ..... [January 31, 2023](#)

22  
23 **MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED**  
24 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW**  
25 **MOTION CARRIED**  
26 **5-0-0**

27  
28 Brookline School Board – **Non-Public** ..... [January 31, 2023](#)

29  
30 **MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED**  
31 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MARSANO**  
32 **MOTION CARRIED**  
33 **5-0-0**

34  
35 Brookline School Board – **Deliberative Session** ..... [February 8, 2023](#)

36  
37 *The following amendments were offered:*

38  
39 Page 5, Line 14; replace “going” with “go”  
40 Page 10, Line 16; correct the spelling of “save”  
41 Page 22, Line 14; replace “IN” with “In”  
42 Page 25, Line 25 replace “or” with “for”

43  
44 **MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED**  
45 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW**  
46 **MOTION CARRIED**  
47 **5-0-0**

1 **PUBLIC INPUT**

2  
3 *Chairman Haag opened the floor for public input at 6:04 p.m.*

4  
5 Olly Hill

6  
7 Believes the dress code is unfair and targeted towards girls. The dress code unfairly targets girls when most  
8 examples used are things like tank tops and spaghetti straps; items boys usually don't wear. It infers that boys  
9 don't wear anything bad and that girls are the problem. It also points out girls bodies or body fat or is aimed at  
10 girls who have bigger chests or other body parts.

11  
12 A lot of the time when teachers point out body fat or a body part that they feel should be covered, it makes kids  
13 insecure. She has been dress coded many times and has been told to cover up or to put on a sweatshirt. She  
14 remembers one day she was sitting in the bus line waiting for her bus. She had a tank top on in hot weather and  
15 was told to put on a sweatshirt. When she explained she did not have one, she was taken to the office and had to  
16 sit there and wait for her bus. Another time she was talked to for showing too much. Again, she was in a tank  
17 top. This made her insecure about having a bigger chest than most other girls in her grade. She would like to  
18 have a further conversation at the next Board meeting as she does not believe the dress expectations as written  
19 are appropriate. She would like to talk more about her thoughts and ideas.

20  
21 Superintendent Corey thanked the student for coming before the Board. Although there is no dress code policy  
22 in Brookline, policies from the other districts within the SAU could be sent to the Policy Committee for  
23 consideration.

24  
25 Chairman Haag noted the next meeting would be the Organizational Meeting during which member(s) would be  
26 appointed to the various committees. It may take a bit of time before the Board has a draft policy for  
27 consideration. The student and her parent(s) will be made aware of the meeting during which a draft policy  
28 would be discussed.

29  
30 Chairman Haag noted the period for public input would remain open until 6:34 p.m.

31  
32 **PRINCIPALS' REPORT**

33  
34 Principals Bouley and Molinari highlighted items from the report included as part of the [agenda](#) packet.

35  
36 Principal Bouley noted enrollment remains steady (total of 585 students). She commented on the level of  
37 student, teacher, and family participation for STEAM Night.

38  
39 Principal Molinari spoke of the celebration of 100<sup>th</sup> day, Valentine's Day, and STEAM Night. What he found  
40 most impressive while watching this project unfold was that students went through the engineering design  
41 process in all 4 grade levels. The kindergarten students were partnered with 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students and 1<sup>st</sup> grade  
42 with 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. That allowed the older students to be leaders for the younger students and provided role models  
43 for the younger students.

44  
45 **DISCUSSION**

- 46  
47 • Teacher Survey

1 Superintendent Corey stated he, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug, Kelly Seeley, Business Administrator,  
2 and Board members Zakar and Micavich met via Zoom to review the proposed survey from OCI. It consists of  
3 30 questions, is validated, believed to be very important and a great starting point for gathering data.  
4

5 ;Members Zakar and Micavich were charged with preparing a cover memo to go along with the survey.  
6

7 Member Zakar stated the Organizational Climate Index (OCI) survey tool is a short organizational climate  
8 descriptive measure for schools. It has four dimensions; Principal leadership, teacher professionalism,  
9 achievement press for students to perform academically, and vulnerability to the community. Each of these  
10 dimensions was measured by a subtest of the OCI. The reliability scores for the scales were relatively high.  
11

12 The desire is for a tool that could be used without modifications to avoid impacting the validity.  
13

14 The survey tool has been benchmarked, which means when our faculty and staff complete it and we get the  
15 results back, they will be anonymous, and we will be able to score it and look at item numbers for each score  
16 and come up with generalizations about areas the feedback is benchmarked to.  
17

18 Chairman Haag asked, with the survey being manual (pen and paper), from a scoring standpoint, will it be a  
19 manual tabulation. Superintendent Corey stated it is a Scantron sheet. Where the appropriate oval would be  
20 colored in, the papers could be sent through the machine, which would tabulate the responses.  
21

22 Member Zakar stated she and Member Micavich drafted a statement to serve as a cover letter to accompany the  
23 survey.  
24

25 The draft reads as follows:  
26

27 *“Dear Staff Members,*  
28

29 *Thank you for taking the time today to carefully consider and respond to this climate survey. The Brookline*  
30 *School Board represents a Town that deeply values and appreciates the teachers, paraprofessionals,*  
31 *administrators and other staff members who provide an education to our children. Our goal in providing this*  
32 *survey is to gain a better understanding of the climate in the Brookline schools and to provide a tool that allows*  
33 *your voices to be heard.*  
34

35 *We selected a tool that has been validated and is benchmarked. The survey is being given by pen and paper to*  
36 *provide anonymity. The results of the survey will be shared directly with the Brookline School Board and will*  
37 *be used to inform decision making regarding allocation of resources, potential further inquiries into staff*  
38 *perceptions, professional development, and goals for the school year.*  
39

40 *We appreciate you taking the time out of your busy day to share your thoughts, feelings, and opinions with us.*  
41 *We hope this will be the first of many opportunities we have to listen to you and work with you all to continue to*  
42 *foster a supportive school community.”*  
43

44 Asked if the data is only shared with the School Board or with Administrators as well, Member Zakar stated it  
45 would be shared at a School Board meeting. It was suggested the statement could read “The tabulated results  
46 will be shared at a Brookline School Board meeting”.

1 Asked, Member Zakar noted mention was made of the possibility of handing the survey out at the conclusion of  
2 a staff meeting. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug remarked it has to be made available in a way to ensure  
3 that all staff receive it.

4  
5 Chairman Haag commented if the timeframe were 2-3 weeks it would allow everyone an opportunity to be  
6 heard and the results tabulated.

7  
8 Asked if this was intended to be a one-time event, Member Zakar stated this to be used sort of as a baseline  
9 after which we can see if there are other areas that need to be explored. Member Marsano suggested a survey at  
10 the beginning, middle, and end of the school year would provide better data for how things are going.

11  
12 Superintendent Corey suggested, if approved by the Board tonight, it could be opened up the Monday after  
13 vacation (March 6<sup>th</sup>) and then closed on the 14<sup>th</sup>, which is an early release day. There could be a collection box  
14 or some other mechanism for receiving the completed surveys.

15  
16 Principal Molinari suggested it could be put in mailboxes on the 6<sup>th</sup>. Anyone not having a mailbox could  
17 receive a copy at the office.

18  
19 Superintendent Corey noted the union and union President are aware and supportive.

20  
21 If the desire is for due dates to be included in the cover letter, Superintendent Corey suggested they could be  
22 added at the top in bold lettering.

23  
24 • Fiscal 2023 Revenue & Expense Update

25  
26 As of 1/30/2023, the area of special education is over budget by \$197,927 as a result of occurrences after the  
27 budget was put together. ADA projects are over budget by \$106,294. There were compliance issues that had to  
28 be addressed such as sidewalk ramps.

29  
30 The result is a negative balance of \$54,429. When this was reviewed in December, the estimated negative  
31 balance was \$120,000 higher. In March, the Board will discuss the potential of utilizing monies from the  
32 Special Education Trust to address the unexpected expenses. The Board could also choose to look at covering  
33 the costs of the ADA projects out of the Unreserved Fund Balance.

34  
35 Noted was that the district has gone a number of months with an unfilled administrative position. A custodian  
36 position was just filled at CSDA but had been vacant for a few months. It is believed the ending balance will  
37 improve.

38  
39 • Special Education Trust

40  
41 ***Postponed until next regular meeting.***

42  
43 • Teacher Contract Statement – Voter Information Guide

44  
45 Superintendent Corey spoke of postcards the teaching staff, through their union organization, were going to be  
46 sending out. The union and a community member asked him if the Board could participate in those postcards.  
47 He does not recommend it as there may come a time when the Board is not supportive of an issue. The Board  
48 has clearly stated its position in two forms; the documents published for the voter guide, which shows a 5-0

1 recommendation from the Board and remarks made at the Deliberative Session regarding the value we place on  
2 our teachers and what we believe this contract does for them. He consulted legal who was of the same opinion.  
3

4 The group moved forward today with their own statement.  
5

6 Asked if the Administration is still on track with the reveal of RMMS following February vacation,  
7 Superintendent Corey stated the project is progressing wonderfully. Principal Molinari stated his belief the  
8 area will be able to be utilized after the April break. Superintendent Corey suggested it may be good to perform  
9 another tour of the facility at the start of the new term.  
10

11 **DELIBERATIONS**  
12

- 13 • To see what action, if any, the Board wishes to take regarding conducting a teacher survey for the Brookline  
14 School District.  
15

16 **MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO CONDUCT A TEACHER SURVEY FOR THE BROOKLINE**  
17 **SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
18 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW**  
19

20 **ON THE QUESTION**  
21

22 Member Zakar suggested reference as a climate survey.  
23

24 **MOTION WITHDRAWN**

25 **MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO CONDUCT A CLIMATE SURVEY FOR THE BROOKLINE**  
26 **SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
27 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW**  
28

29 **ON THE QUESTION**  
30

31 Member Marsano asked for additional clarification. Superintendent Corey stated the vote would be to utilize  
32 the amended statement and the 30-question survey.  
33

34 **MOTION WITHDRAWN**

35 **MOTION BY MEMBER MARSANO TO APPROVE THE USE OF THE AMENDED STATEMENT**  
36 **AND OCI SURVEY FOR ASSESSING THE CLIMATE OF THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
37 **SYSTEM**  
38 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW**  
39 **MOTION CARRIED**

40 **5-0-0**  
41

42 *The public input period was declared closed at 6:38 p.m.*

1 **ADJOURNMENT**

2  
3 **MOTION BY MEMBER MARSANO TO ADJOURN**

4 **SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW**

5 **MOTION CARRIED**

6 **5-0-0**

7  
8 *The February 22, 2023 meeting of the Brookline School Board was adjourned at 6:39 p.m.*

9  
10  
11  
12 Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_

DRAFT