



**HAMILTON-WENHAM**  
**REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
5 SCHOOL STREET, WENHAM, MA 01984 · TEL. 978-468-5310

**School Committee Meeting ([agenda](#))**

**In-Person Meeting**

**Buker Elementary School Multipurpose Room**

**In-Person Meeting, [Zoom Link](#) is for Public Comment Only**

**Meeting ID: 818 3563 8322**

**Thursday, March 17, 2022**

**6:30 PM - 9:20 PM**

**Present:**

Dana Allara, Chairperson

Michelle Bailey

Julia Campbell, Vice Secretary

Michelle Horgan

Anna Siedzik, Vice Chairperson

David Polito

**Also Present:**

Eric Tracy, HWRSD Superintendent

Vincent Leone, Assistant Superintendent to Finance and Administration

Thomas Geary, Director of Maintenance, Facilities, and Operations

Chris Domoracki, Student Government Representative

**MASC Evaluation Procedures & Workshop, Classroom #8**

6:30 PM - 7:00PM

**1. Call to Order**

With a quorum present, Ms. Allara, Chairperson, calls the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

All those in attendance, with the exception of School Committee member Anna Siedzik, rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Land Acknowledgement**

[Exhibit](#)

Ms. Allara reads the *Land Acknowledgement*, as detailed in the [exhibit](#).

**4. Public Comments**

[Exhibit](#)

*Any citizen wishing to speak before the Committee shall identify himself or herself by name and address. Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes to present their material. After Citizen's Comments, the chat feature will be turned off. If members want to be recognized, they can use the raise hand feature.*

Ms. Allara notes that this meeting is being recorded, live streamed, and broadcast by HWCAM. She reviews the School Committee's protocols surrounding citizen comments: comments are limited to 3 minutes (Ms. Bailey is assigned the timekeeper); comments shall focus on issues within the purview of

the School Committee; and citizens are asked to please spell their names and provide their address for the record.

*Andrea Van Boven, 20 Middlewood Drive, Wenham (in-person):* Ms. Van Boven would like to voice her concerns regarding the proposed Flag Policy. The Flag Policy and the linked exhibits appear on tonight's agenda. However, Ms. Van Boven argues that concerned citizens like herself have not been given adequate time to review the policy and ask questions and/or offer feedback. In addition, Ms. Van Boven is concerned about the amount of time and resources the School Committee continues to focus on this (divisive and controversial) issue, especially since the district faces numerous, arguably more important, academic challenges.

*Kirsten Alexander, Larch Row, Wenham (in person):* Ms. Alexander thanks the School Committee members, district administration, and Marc Terry, district's legal counsel, for their thoughtful work developing the proposed Flag Policy. Because the district currently lacks any such policy, Ms. Alexander urges the School Committee to adopt the proposed policy to avoid challenges such as those that arose for the City of Boston. She believes that flags can bring the community together (as seen with Hamilton - Wenham's recent Pride celebrations and Pride Flag raising). Flags aligning with district policy and helping students feel included and welcomed should be flown with pride.

*Erica Mitchell, 30 Marjorie Street, Hamilton (Zoom):* Ms. Mitchell offers a comment regarding the Peru Field Trip, which appears on the agenda later in tonight's meeting. She believes field trips, such as the Peru Field Trip, offer great benefit to students and families. Such trips encourage diversity and an increased cultural awareness and understanding. As a parent, she feels comfortable with the mitigation strategies in place for this trip, and she believes the trip as planned is safe and appropriate at this time.

*Eric Musser 9 Naples Rd., Hamilton (Zoom):* Mr. Musser offers a comment concerning the proposed Flag Policy. As he has stated in previous comments to the School Committee, the amount of time and resources the School Committee has dedicated to this issue is unreasonable. He has requested information relating to the amount of money the district has spent on legal counsel specific to this issue; he is still waiting on this information. Mr. Musser reiterates that the School Committee should be prioritizing other issues in the district, and should no longer dedicate time and resources arguing about the flag policy.

*Beth Herr, 270 Asbury Street, Hamilton (in-person):* Ms. Herr thanks the School Committee for their ongoing work and dedication to the district. She notes that she is offering a public comment this evening as a follow up to an email she sent to the School Committee regarding the Flag Policy. Ms. Herr believes that the District should only display the US and MA State flags. She refers to a poll (conducted on a Facebook Page), noting that individuals across all party lines seem to be in agreement that only the American Flag should be displayed. Those poll results include: 65 responses "all flags except the American Flag should be removed;" 15 responses "the Pride Flag and all other requested flags should be displayed;" and 3 responses "Continue displaying the Pride Flag".

*Emily Minster, 35 Hilltop Drive, Wenham (Zoom):* Ms. Minster thanks the School Committee for their dedication to the district, and for developing the Flag Policy. She encourages the School Committee to vote in favor of adopting the proposed flag policy later this evening. Ms. Minster believes that adopting this policy will allow solidarity with and representation of diverse student identities. She is a recent HWRHS graduate, and has had the opportunity to speak with current High School students who have voiced their support for the Pride flag being displayed in schools.

Ms. Allara closes public comments at about 7:17 PM; the Zoom link will close at this time. Community members may choose to view the meeting through HWCAM's livestream on the HWCAM [website](#) or [YouTube channel](#).

**5. Review of School Committee Protocols**

[Exhibit](#)

Mr. Polito reads protocol #7 as written in the *School Committee Protocols* detailed in the [exhibit](#).

**6. Student Representative Report**

Chris Domoracki, *Student Government Representative*, reviews his presentation to the School Committee, including updates from each school (except Cutler).

**7. Consent Agenda**

A. Warrants

[Exhibit](#)

- Voucher No. 20
- Voucher No. 1034
- Voucher No. 1035
- Voucher No. 3088
- Voucher No. 3089
- Voucher No. 3090

B. Minutes

- March 3, 2022 Executive Session
- March 3, 2022
- February 17, 2022
- February 10, 2022

[Exhibit](#)

[Exhibit](#)

[Exhibit](#)

[Exhibit](#)

C. Donations

[Exhibit](#)

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE CONSENT AGENDA AS WRITTEN, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 3, 2022, AND THE DONATION; THERE CAN BE NO FURTHER CHANGES.**

**MOTION by Julia Campbell; SECONDED by Anna Siedzik.**

**MOTION PASSES unanimously through vote of six (6) members present.**

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE APPROVE AND RELEASE THE EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 3, 2022; THERE CAN BE NO FURTHER CHANGES.**

**MOTION by Michelle Bailey; SECONDED by Anna Siedzik.**

**MOTION PASSES unanimously through vote of six (6) members present.**

There is a brief discussion regarding the donation detailed in Mr. Genualdo's 03/13/2022 memorandum linked in the [exhibit](#). Superintendent Tracy clarifies that the \$1,959.00 donation would fund an Assistant Coach position: a stipend position that does not accrue OPEB, retirement, or any additional payments from the district.

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE DONATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,959.00 FROM THE HAMILTON - WENHAM**

**BASEBALL BOOSTERS TO FUND THE ASSISTANT COACH POSITION AS DETAILED ON THE [EXHIBIT](#) IN THE CONSENT AGENDA; THERE CAN BE NO FURTHER CHANGES.**

**MOTION by Julia Campbell; SECONDED by Michelle Horgan.  
MOTION PASSES unanimously through vote of six (6) members present.**

**8. New Business**

A. Facilities Report

[Exhibit](#)

Mr. Geary reviews the facilities report, as detailed in the [exhibit](#). He encourages the School Committee to read the report in its entirety, which includes a breakdown of each facility and the capital projects planned or underway to address the aging infrastructure. There is a discussion surrounding district and school enrollment (as detailed on page 4 of the [report](#)) and the enrollment report forthcoming from Mr. Menegoni. Continued discussion regarding strategies to address the district's capital needs and facility improvement. This report is currently available through the link on the agenda, but it will also be published to the district's website.

B. SOI High School Roof

[Exhibit 1](#)  
[Exhibit 2](#)

Mr. Geary reviews the MSBA SOI application process and the project scope, as detailed in the exhibits above. The High School roof is in need of repair, and Mr. Geary details the project qualifications.

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE:**

**RESOLVED: HAVING CONVENED IN AN OPEN MEETING ON MARCH 17, 2022, PRIOR TO THE SOI SUBMISSION CLOSING DATE, THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OF HAMILTON AND WENHAM, IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS CHARTER, BY-LAWS, AND ORDINANCES, HAS VOTED TO AUTHORIZE THE SUPERINTENDENT TO SUBMIT TO THE MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL BUILDING AUTHORITY THE STATEMENT OF INTEREST FORM DATED MARCH 3, 2022 FOR THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL LOCATED AT 775 BAY RD. HAMILTON, MA WHICH DESCRIBES AND EXPLAINS THE FOLLOWING DEFICIENCIES AND THE PRIORITY CATEGORY(S) FOR WHICH AN APPLICATION MAY BE SUBMITTED TO THE MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL BUILDING AUTHORITY IN THE FUTURE TO REPLACE THE HIGH SCHOOL ROOF UNDER THE ACCELERATED REPAIR PROGRAM; AND HEREBY FURTHER SPECIFICALLY ACKNOWLEDGES THAT BY SUBMITTING THIS STATEMENT OF INTEREST FORM, THE MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL BUILDING AUTHORITY IN NO WAY GUARANTEES THE ACCEPTANCE OR THE APPROVAL OF AN APPLICATION, THE AWARDED OF A GRANT OR ANY OTHER FUNDING COMMITMENT FROM THE MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL BUILDING AUTHORITY, OR COMMITS THE HAMILTON-WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT TO FILING AN APPLICATION FOR FUNDING WITH THE MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL BUILDING AUTHORITY.**

**MOTION by Julia Campbell; SECONDED by Michelle Bailey.**

*Discussion:* Application process; cost estimate; budget planning and priorities; etc.

**MOTION PASSES unanimously through vote of 6 (six) members present.**

C. Student Opportunity Act Vote

[Exhibit](#)

Superintendent Tracy reviews the *HWRSD FY22 SOA Amendment for DESE*, as presented in the [exhibit](#). He notes the error on page 17: "*Schedule ensures students have access to services; all minutes and service delivery expectations are met*" should be marked as "partial implementation" rather than "full implementation".

There is a discussion surrounding the details contained in the document, including a discussion about how data was gathered and presented.

There may be editing to this document in the future.

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE AUTHORIZE THE SUPERINTENDENT TO SUBMIT THE FY22 SOA AMENDMENT FOR DESE.**

**MOTION by Julia Campbell; SECONDED by David Polito.  
MOTION PASSES unanimously through vote of 6 (six) members present.**

D. Portrait of the Graduate

[Exhibit](#)

Superintendent Tracy provides an overview of the Portrait of a Graduate, as presented in the [exhibit](#). There is discussion regarding graphic design for the project; further details surrounding the report; editing and formatting changes suggested; etc.

E. Superintendent's Formative Evaluation Discussion

Ms. Allara summarizes the evaluation process, noting that a workshop on evaluation process immediately preceded this meeting. School Committee members offer some feedback to Superintendent Tracy regarding his goals, involvement in the community, evidence provided so far, etc.

F. Peru Trip Discussion

Superintendent Tracy reviews the Peru Field Trip plans including COVID mitigation strategies in place. There is a brief discussion regarding trip cancellation policy; handling a positive COVID test; etc. No action is needed at this time.

**9. Finance and Operations**

A. E & D Certification Announcement

[Exhibit 1](#)

[Exhibit 2](#)

Mr. Leone presents the E & D certification announcement, as detailed in the exhibits above. He reviews E & D funding in the past, and details the balances in the budget. There is discussion regarding the amount of E & D; communication with the public; etc.

B. Town Meeting Budget Flyer Approval

[Exhibit](#)

There is discussion regarding the Town Meeting Budget Flyer, as designed by School Committee member Mr. Polito, and as shown in the [exhibit](#) linked to the agenda. There is a brief discussion regarding potential edits to the flyer.

Mr. Leone explains that the flyer must be approved by each of the Town Meeting moderators before distribution. There is further discussion regarding the logistics of the flyer distribution.

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ACCEPT THE TOWN MEETING BUDGET FLYER AS PRESENTED IN THE [EXHIBIT](#) ON THE AGENDA; FURTHER THAT WE AUTHORIZE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER DAVID POLITO TO EDIT THE DOCUMENT AS NEEDED, AND FURTHER THAT WE AUTHORIZE VINCENT LEONE, ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT TO FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION, TO DISTRIBUTE THE FINALIZED FLYER TO THE TOWNS.**

**MOTION by Julia Campbell; SECONDED by Michelle Bailey.**

*Discussion:* Mr. Polito clarifies the revisions requests made this evening (minor typographical/formatting changes).

**MOTION PASSES unanimously through vote of 6 (six) members present.**

**10. Policy**

A. Second Reading & Vote Flag Policy

[Exhibit](#)  
[Exhibit](#)

Ms. Allara notes that there was a great deal of confusion surrounding the Flag Policy - specifically whether the School Committee had previously addressed the topic and whether it appeared on past meeting agendas. Ms. Allara explains that the topic of the District's Flag Policy emerged last May, and since that time, the School Committee discussed the topic in open meeting (see [02/10/2022 meeting minutes](#)).

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADOPT THE FLAG POLICY AS WRITTEN IN THE [EXHIBIT](#) ATTACHED TO THE AGENDA.**

**MOTION by Julia Campbell; SECONDED by Anna Siedzik.**

*Discussion:* There is a lengthy discussion regarding the district's proposed *Display of Flags on School District Property* (KFD) policy as detailed in the [exhibit](#), including details and considerations brought forth in Mr. Terry's 02/18/2022 *Advice Regarding Government Speech* letter ([exhibit](#)). There is discussion surrounding the 3-part test to classify "Government Speech" with Ms. Siedzik pointing out that the absence/presence of a Flag Policy would not limit the ability of the School Committee to display flags.

There is ongoing discussion regarding the School Committee's options moving forward. Ms. Campbell would like to see a revised policy affording the Superintendent authority to decide which flags are displayed in the district. There is further discussion regarding the numerous complexities involved with this issue, including the definitions of the terms *flag* and *district property*; elements of government speech; anticipated workload in the future; etc. Mr. Polito commends the hard work that went into drafting this policy, but he does not believe the School Committee needs to rush into adopting this policy.

**I MOVE TO VOTE.**

**MOTION by Michelle Horgan; SECONDED by Julia Campbell.**

**MOTION FAILS (3 in favor; 3 opposed).**

*Continued discussion:* Ms. Bailey notes that the District's flag policy (or current lack of one) has become a contentious issue within the community, and she would like the district to adopt a policy in order to relieve the Superintendent of fighting a culture war. She asks that the *Policy/Legislative Subcommittee* develop a policy wherein the District displays only official government flags - the Massachusetts State flag and the American flag. In researching flag policies from other governmental agencies, Ms. Bailey highlights the Department of Defense (DOD's) [flag policy](#) language: *we must always remain focused on what unifies us*. She encourages the School Committee to follow suit, remaining focused on the mission of education, and avoid using flags as a method of teaching values. Ms. Bailey argues that values should be taught through action, curriculum, and parents.

Ms. Siedzik points out that the School District has a different set of mandates than the DOD. She references the DESE website page *Principles for Ensuring Safe and Supportive Learning Environments for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning (LGBTQ) Students* ([link](#)).

There is some disagreement about whether the current discussion aligns with the agenda. Ms. Allara notes that the agenda item is not centered around the Pride/Progress Flag, however, Ms. Siedzik argues that her comment relates directly to Ms. Bailey's reference to DOD policy, which flags should be allowed, and the district's role in teaching values.

Ms. Siedzik states that state law specifically addresses values in curriculum and civil rights, more specifically, principle #6 states:

Schools, through their curricula, shall encourage respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals, including LGBTQ individuals...Research shows that inclusion of LGBTQ topics in curricula corresponds to all students reporting that they feel safer in school, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Curricula should reflect issues of sexual orientation and gender identity, as relevant, to be inclusive across subject areas, including, but not limited to, health, social science, language arts, and family life ([link](#)).

Ms. Siedzik points out the Safe School Program's [page](#) on the mass.gov website provides many resources for students, families, and education professionals, including a [printable flag](#) for schools to display. Further, she argues that the Department actively encourages districts to take on a leadership role in the teaching of values as it relates to inclusion in schools.

Ms. Allara clarifies the motion on the floor: if the School Committee votes no, there will be no policy in place. As always, School Committee members would be able to make motions requesting the display of flags.

#### **I MOVE TO VOTE.**

**MOTION by Dana Allara; SECONDED by David Polito.**

*Original motion to adopt Flag Policy as presented:*

**MOTION FAILS (0 in favor; 6 opposed).**

### **11. Superintendent's Report**

#### **A. District Goals Update**

Superintendent Tracy provides an update on District Goals:

##### **1. DEI**

- a. 03/09/2022 meeting of Advisory Committee: work included reviewing student data and planning for focus groups;
- b. 03/14/2022 all-staff professional development included exploring social identities; prejudice and stereotypes; unconscious/implicit bias; impact on inclusion/belonging in the classrooms and schools (Superintendent Tracy thanks those volunteers who made this professional development possible);
- c. Faculty and district leadership one-to-one interviews as part of the equity audit (anticipated to district in early June).

##### **2. MTSS**

- a. Approved \$81,000 DESE grant for accelerated literacy learning with high quality instructional materials: funds must be used by June 30th;
- b. MTSS leadership met 02/16/2022 creating literacy and instructional vision and beginning to identify essential agreements;
- c. Professional Study Groups wrapped up this week;
- d. Teachers spent time reviewing others' reflections shared in Mighty Networks;
- e. Secondary meeting - meeting with MTSS team, coordinators are building their teams now;
- f. School and classroom walkthroughs beginning in April: data from these walkthroughs will be analyzed.

### 3. *Athletic & Facilities*

- a. Gale Study completed initial schematic design for athletic facilities improvement project (tennis courts and softball field behind middle school). The estimates and design were presented on 03/07/2022 to the Facilities Improvement Working Group;
  - b. 2022 Facilities Report, presented earlier this meeting by Mr. Geary ([exhibit](#));
  - c. MSBA officially invited the district for the eligibility period for the Cutler project.
4. *Teaching & Learning: World Language Advisory Committee* (completed)
  5. *Portrait of a graduate* (completed, reported earlier)

Ms. Bailey encourages Superintendent Tracy to communicate DEIB meeting dates at least 2 weeks in advance.

## 12. **Committee Reports**

### A. Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee

Ms. Bailey reports that the *Capital/Financial Planning Subcommittee* tasked Mr. Leone with making contact.

### B. Policy/Legislative Subcommittee

Ms. Siedzik reports that the *Policy/Legislative Subcommittee* will meet next Monday, 03/21/2022, with the goal of completing review of **Policy Section J**. This will be Ms. Horgan's last subcommittee meeting. Ms. Siedzik appreciates the opportunity she had to work alongside Ms. Horgan and will miss serving with her.

### C. Negotiations Subcommittee

Ms. Allara reports that the *Negotiations Subcommittee* will meet next Wednesday, 03/23/2022 with the Custodial Union.

## 13. **Chair's Report**

- Saturday, 04/02/2022: Annual Town Meeting;
- 04/07/200 Town Elections.

## 14. **Topics for Future Meetings**

- School Committee member coffee/ community meetings: Ms. Allara would like to discuss possibly hosting public coffee time for the public to meet with 1-2 School Committee members;
- Community engagement/ budget communication
  - Mothers Club;
  - Friends of the Arts;
  - Friends of the Library;
  - Council on Aging: Ms. Horgan, Mr. Leone, Mr. Tracy will attend the meeting next Wednesday.
- Discussion regarding flying the Progress Pride flag for the month of June in celebration of Pride month.

## 15. **Vote to Adjourn**

**I MOVE THAT THE HAMILTON - WENHAM REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE ADJOURN THE 03/17/2022 MEETING AT 9:42 PM AND ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO G.L. C. 30A, SECTION 21(A)(3) TO DISCUSS STRATEGY WITH RESPECT TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING OR LITIGATION IF AN OPEN MEETING MAY HAVE A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON THE**



**BARGAINING OR LITIGATING POSITION OF THE PUBLIC BODY (DISCRIMINATION CASE); AND NOT RETURN TO OPEN SESSION THEREAFTER.**

**MOTION by Dana Allara; SECONDED by Anna Siedzik.**

David Polito	YES;
Julia Campbell	YES;
Dana Allara	YES;
Anna Siedzik	YES;
Michelle Horgan	YES;
Michelle Bailey	YES.

**MOTION PASSES unanimously through roll call vote of six (6) members present.**

*Respectfully submitted April 3 2022 by Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary.*

*Respectfully resubmitted April 15 2022 by Mahala Lettvin, Recording Secretary, with revisions discussed during 04/07/2022 School Committee meeting.*

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