



# HAMILTON-WENHAM

## REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

5 SCHOOL STREET, WENHAM, MA 01984 · TEL. 978-468-5310

**School Committee Meeting ([Agenda](#))**  
**Buker Elementary School Multipurpose Room**  
**In-Person Meeting, [Zoom Link](#) is for Public Comment Only**  
**Meeting ID: 832 3839 7963**  
**February 2, 2023**  
**7:00pm-8:05pm**

**Present:**

Dana Allara, Chair  
Anna Siedzik, Vice Chair  
Amy Kunberger, Secretary  
Julia Campbell, Assistant Secretary  
Jennifer Carr  
David Frenkel  
David Polito (entered meeting at 7:05pm)

**Also Present:**

HWRSD Superintendent Eric Tracy

**1. Call to Order**

With a quorum present, Chair Dana Allara calls the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance**

With the exception of Anna Siedzik, all those present rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Land Acknowledgement**

Anna Siedzik reads the HWRSD Indigenous Land Acknowledgement as listed on the Agenda.

**4. Citizens Comments**

None; there are no citizens present in the room or Zoom who wish to make a comment.

**5. Review of School Committee Protocols**

Julia Campbell reads the Introduction and Item 12 of the School Committee Protocols as listed on the Agenda.

**6. Review of School Committee Mission Statement**

Julia Campbell reads the following portion of the School Committee Mission Statement: *The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee will lead and inspire a District that: Supports and guides the Superintendent to execute and achieve the Approved 2022-2023 District Goals.*

**7. Consent Agenda**

Chair Allara asks Committee members if they would like to hold any items on the Consent Agenda. Jennifer Carr asks to hold the MMEA All-States Band Competition Field Trip. Anna Siedzik asks to hold the 2022 Annual Report for the Towns.

**I MOVE THAT THE HWRSC APPROVES THE CONSENT AGENDA AS LISTED ON THE AGENDA WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE FIELD TRIP AND ANNUAL REPORT.**

**Motion by Amy Kunberger; Second by Anna Siedzik**  
**Motion passes 7-0**

Regarding the MMEA All-States Band Field Trip: Jennifer Carr asks about acceptability of using personal vehicles as presented in the [Exhibit](#). Superintendent Tracy confirms that use of personal vehicles is permissible under District Policy, provided that all drivers hold a valid license and vehicle registration. He also notes that parental permission is required, per the memo in the packet drafted by Principal Bryan Menegoni.

**I MOVE THAT THE HWRSC APPROVES THE MMEA ALL-STATES BAND COMPETITION FIELD TRIP AS LISTED ON THE AGENDA.**

**Motion by Amy Kunberger; Second by Jennifer Carr**  
**Motion passes 7-0**

Regarding the Annual Report: Anna Siedzik notes that the [Exhibit](#) presented is much different and shorter than the Annual Report typically adopted by the School Committee, and wonders if this is for something else. Superintendent Tracy confirms this Annual Report is only being prepared for approval at the request of the Town of Wenham. The District's own Budget & Annual Report is currently in development and will be presented to the School Committee for consideration at the next meeting on February 9.

**I MOVE THAT THE HWRSC APPROVES THE ANNUAL REPORT AS LISTED ON THE AGENDA.**

**Motion by Amy Kunberger; Second by Julia Campbell**  
**Motion passes 7-0**

**8. New Business**

None

**9. Finance & Operations**

None

**10. Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Eric Tracy presented on the following:

- The first meeting of Cutler MSBA Building Committee happened this week. They approved and are starting the process of hiring an OPM, working from a draft contract from state. The Building Committee will modify the contract and send it back to the MSBA for approval before posting. They also created a subcommittee that will review all applications and narrow the field to the final (3). At that time, they will bring the MSBA in for final interviews and selection.
- Superintendent Tracy and Assistant Superintendent Leone are working to tighten the FY24 Budget documents and Annual Report in preparation for the Second Public Hearing and School Committee adoption vote on February 9. They are specifically adding more graphics and visual organizers as requested during the budget review process and various meetings with Town bodies.
- Superintendent Tracy summarized his recent trip to Atlanta, GA for a leadership conference with other Superintendents from across the country. They will meet as a leadership cohort several times over the next (6) weeks, with a focus on collaboration techniques and communication strategies. He found the sessions inspiring and is grateful for the opportunity to participate in the program.
- Committee Member David Frenkel asked for an update on a potential YMCA afterschool program. Superintendent Tracy said he's had a preliminary conversation with Chris Bevilacqua from the Ipswich YMCA, who is working on survey that will be sent out soon to elementary school families.

**11. Committee Reports**

a. Capital Finance

Scheduled meeting on 2/9 at 4:30pm

b. Policy

i. Third Reading & Vote Policy I

As directed by the full Committee, the Policy Subcommittee revisited (3) specific I Section policies: IJ, IJ-R, and IMG.

IJ: Anna Siedzik summarized the changes made by the Policy Subcommittee, specifically, the removal of any language that implied or stated the School Committee adopted or approved specific curriculum. Rather, language was modified to state the Committee had expectations for curriculum selections to be delegated to the District's professional staff. Ms. Siedzik summarized the advice given to the Policy Subcommittee by the MASC around the inclusion of "budgetary constraints," such that by adopting the budget (and also the high school course catalog), the Committee was effectively "furnishing" materials to students through the budget process itself. The full Committee offered general thanks and gratitude for the revisions as requested, and there were no additional substantive questions.

**I MOVE THE HWRSC APPROVES POLICY IJ AS LISTED ON THE AGENDA.**

**Motion by Amy Kunberger; Second by Julia Campbell  
Motion passes 7-0**

IJ-R: Ms. Siedzik summarized the changes made to this policy, which were similar to the changes to IJ to clarify that the School Committee does not adopt curriculum, but rather maintains expectations and policies regarding instructional materials more generally. At the Subcommittee level, there was discussion of the need for this policy if we already have policy KE on Public Complaints. It was stated that IJ-R provides helpful frameworks to support the Superintendent and provide clarity on the process for the public, specifically, that all complaints would be resolved using “District adopted policies and procedures,” which are clearly outlined in policy KE. The two policies – KE and IJ-R – work well together. The full Committee offered general thanks and gratitude for the revisions as requested, and there were no additional substantive questions.

**I MOVE THE HWRSC APPROVES POLICY IJ-R AS LISTED ON THE AGENDA.**

**Motion by Amy Kunberger; Second by Julia Campbell  
Motion passes 7-0**

IMG: As requested, the Policy Subcommittee located and updated the relevant DPH guidance, entitled “Animals in the Classroom: Recommendations for Schools,” instead of the previously cited DPH guidance, entitled “Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds,” that proved unfindable and therefore inaccurate. The correction of the cross-referenced DPH guidance was the only change requested by the full Committee for the Policy Subcommittee to review.

Jennifer Carr noted a potential concern with the taxonomy presented, and asked if the Committee might change the wording in Section 4 regarding prohibited animals to “fur-bearing carnivores” instead of “fur-bearing animals.” Dr. Carr expressed concern that “fur-bearing animals” was too broad and would prohibit some animals with little to no risk to humans regarding rabies transmission from entering the schools. Dr. Carr suggested the Committee solicit teacher input, since some of the potentially-prohibited animals have historically been allowed. There was much discussion on this point, with many members questioning the intent of the policy and whether or not issues unrelated to rabies (e.g. salmonella, lice, parasites, and dander) should also be considered.

**I MOVE THAT WE CHANGE FUR-BEARING ANIMALS TO ANIMALS THAT HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO CARRY DISEASES THAT ARE TRANSMISSIBLE TO HUMANS.**

**Motion by Jennifer Carr; No Second  
Motion fails**

Discussion continues, with Chair Allara asking for a procedural clarification if there are no motions on the table. Further discussion about intent and limits of DPH guidance and how it does or does not integrate with the proposed local IMG policy.

**I MOVE THAT WE ADOPT POLICY IMG AS PRESENTED ON THE AGENDA.**

**Motion by Anna Siedzik; Second by Julia Campbell  
Motion fails 3-4**

**I MOVE THAT WE TABLE POLICY IMG TO A FUTURE MEETING.**

**Motion by David Frenkel; Second by David Polito  
Friendly Amendment by Mr. Polito to change “next meeting” to “a future meeting”  
Motion passes 4-3**

- ii. First Reading Policy L  
Anna Siedzik presented the revised Policy Section L, with various updates based on MASC guidance and changes in state law. Some discussion about the provisions of Policy LBC regarding Relations with Nonpublic Schools. The full Committee did not have any substantive questions needing additional resolution, so Section L will return for a Second Reading & Vote on a future agenda.

c. **Negotiations Committee**

The Subcommittee has not met, however, Superintendent Tracy advised that the District's Teaching Assistants (TA) are working to unionize and in the process of forming a bargaining unit with the state. HWEA will provide support to the new TA union, and the Committee should expect to receive a Demand to Bargain at some point in the future.

**12. Chair's Report**

Chair Allara reminded Hamilton residents that the Town of Hamilton Master Planning Committee is hosting a public session on 2/5 at Miles River Middle School. All are welcome, and coffee and snacks will be provided. Dana asked for an update from Committee Secretary Kunberger on the status of Minutes from past meetings. Amy advised that Minutes are in process and will be presented soon. Superintendent Tracy advised that they are working to hire a new recording secretary, and has a subcontractor working on past meetings on an interim basis. The Committee needs a volunteer for tonight's Minutes; Anna Siedzik volunteered. Dana confirmed our next meeting will be 2/9 as scheduled, and asked that Committee members continue to hold 2/15 in case of unexpected delays in the FY24 Budget approval process.

**13. Topics for Future Meetings**

Anna Siedzik – Pride Flag

David Frenkel – Update on potential afterschool program

Superintendent Tracy advised that he will be constrained at the start of next week's meeting due to scheduled presentations at both the Hamilton and Wenham CPC on the same night. Eric wanted the Committee and public to understand why he might be late and/or back and forth, and not to interpret his late arrival as rudeness.

**14. Vote to Adjourn**

**I MOVE THE HWRSC ADJOURN AT 8:05PM.**

**Motion by Julia Campbell; Second by David Frenkel**

**Motion passes 7-0**

Respectfully Submitted by Anna Siedzik, Vice-Chair, March 12, 2023