

**BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD
MAY 22, 2018
MEETING MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Brookline School Board was conducted on Tuesday, May 22, 2018 at 6:01 p.m. at the Captain Samuel Douglass Academy.

Matthew Maguire, Chairman, presided:

Members of the Board Present: Kenneth Haag, Vice Chairman
 Alison Marsano, Secretary
 Lauren DiGennaro
 Erin Sarris

Members of the Board Absent:

Also in Attendance: Andrew Corey, Superintendent
 Gina Bergskaug, Assistant Superintendent
 Kristen Maher, Assistant Business Administrator
 Dennis Dobe, Principal, Captain Samuel Douglass Academy
 Daniel Molinari, Principal, Richard Maghakian Memorial School

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS - None

CORRESPONDENCE/RESIGNATIONS/NOMINATIONS

Superintendent Corey informed the Board of his nomination of Nicole Palmer for the position of 5th grade Teacher. Ms. Palmer presently resides in Windham, ME. She and her husband are moving down for a job transfer. She has her Bachelors in Elementary Education from Plymouth State University and her Masters in Elementary Special Education, which she earned in 2012. She would come to the District as Masters, Step 8 and a salary of \$55,324. She was the clear-cut recommendation of the committee, and the Administration is excited to welcome her to the Captain Samuel Douglass Academy (CSDA).

MOTION BY MEMBER DIGENNARO TO ACCEPT THE SUPERINTENDENT’S NOMINATION OF NICOLE PALMER FOR THE POSITION OF FIFTH GRADE TEACHER AT THE CAPTAIN SAMUEL DOUGLASS ACADEMY AT A MASTERS, STEP 8 AND A SALARY OF FIFTY-FIVE THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED TWENTY-FOUR DOLLARS (\$55,324).

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MARSANO

ON THE QUESTION

When asked about the size of the applicant pool, Principal Dobe commented it was not as large a pool as might have been anticipated for the position, particularly given the favorable time of year to be seeking candidates. There were approximately 35 applicants.

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

INTERVIEW SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES

Superintendent Corey spoke of the process that would be undertaken in interviewing the candidates for the open Board position.

The following are questions asked of Rebecca Howie and her responses (paraphrased):

1. Why do you want to be on the School Board?

Having had the opportunity to volunteer in the schools over the past few years, has witnessed wonderful things happening. Having witnessed a large class in the Library, she was left wondering how the school year went for the class trying to teach everything that needs to be taught. She learned of the Deliberative Session when the Board made it known at a PTO meeting. Attending that process opened her eyes to the time and effort that goes into making the schools as great as they are, and how important it is to speak to class size, and other issues of importance to the school.

2. What is one item that you would like to see the Board focus on for the upcoming school year?

Maintaining the smaller class sizes is important for optimal learning and growth. Continuing outreach efforts to inform the community of what is occurring at the COOP level. Had her child not been participating in the Robotics Program at CSDA she would not have been aware of the importance of attending the COOP Annual Meeting. She stressed the importance of community education and involvement.

3. What is one area that you feel the Board has made a positive impact on in the last year or two?

Class size is the first thing that comes to mind. Having listened to the presentation last month, it appears some great gains have been made in Math.

4. What do you believe is the biggest opportunity for improvement for the Brookline School District?

Ongoing communication and engagement with the younger parents in the community. Having the engagement of the younger parents will be beneficial down the road.

Mr. Haag questioned how the Board could improve upon that. Ms. Howie expressed she is uncertain of the best way of going about it. She has learned of happenings simply through conversations with other parents involved in school activities. She spoke of opportunities to engage the community during public forums such as information nights, the STEM night at the Richard Maghakian Memorial School (RMMS).

She suggested some form of coordination within the community of scheduling of events to avoid multiple activities occurring on the same day/evening.

5. In this role, how do you believe you can influence change?

Ms. Howie spoke of being involved in the PTO, and her ability to create a link between the Board and parents through that involvement.

6. What is your view on public school?

Ms. Howie commented she went to public schools, and she could not be more pleased with these public schools. Her children are getting a great education and a wonderful experience.

The following are questions asked of Kristen Cospito and her responses (paraphrased):

1. Why do you want to be on the School Board?

Ms. Cospito commented she was surprised by the encouragement she received to consider the position. After looking into the possibility she became excited with the prospect. She sees it as an opportunity for something completely different and to use some of her energy and ability to achieve what she wants for the greater good.

2. What is one item that you would like to see the Board focus on for the upcoming school year?

Full-day kindergarten, which she understands is a struggle that is not entirely in the Board's hands and comes to a vote at the State level. She would like to see the Board tackle this issue.

The second is allocation of more funding toward the STEM program. She would like to see the Board determine why that didn't go the way it should have, why 20% of our community makes 100% of the choices, and what that means.

3. What is one area that you feel the Board has made a positive impact on in the last year or two?

The passing of and hiring of a new Kindergarten teacher who specifically did half-day Kindergarten. Also thought passing, year after year, the half-day students attending the full-day program during the last week of school.

She is aware what was put into the STEM election, and how hard the Board works towards passing things that are that hard to pass.

4. What do you believe is the biggest opportunity for improvement for the Brookline School District?

Community outreach. She commented on the need for parents, present and future, to understand the inside of this locked building, and the process of keeping our children safe while at the same time facilitating this glorious education. During the first few days of school it would help to put boots on the ground. She believes there to be a piece there that has better finesse to it.

Asked to elaborate, she responded a new parent in the District could be given the opportunity to understand the ins and outs of the school day. Even if that information were in written form, it would be helpful.

5. In this role, how do you believe you can influence change?

Ms. Cospito commented she has a lot of energy and excitement towards the things she chooses to do, and when she puts her sights on something it is very likely that she gets it. She believes she has the "it" to do the things that work together, e.g., community experience. Tackling a task together is her favorite thing to do.

6. What is your view on public school?

Believes wholeheartedly in the public school system. She remarked she cannot say enough about her personal fear that currently our public school system is under attack from many sides. People have to understand the error in that argument and how it really does boil down to it being fundamentally right that everybody gets the same education. The public school system is that great equalizer in things. There is nothing wrong with school choice, and she loves the idea of Charter schools and private schools, but when it comes down to it this is where we are, and we are in such a fortunate district that we get an often times skewed perception of what that fight is for public schools.

When asked if she had a question of the Board, Ms. Cospito questioned if the Board wants to fill the slot with someone who will run in March.

Ms. Marsano stated her opinion it is a good opportunity for an individual to get their feet wet and see if it is something there is interest in beyond that.

Ms. Sarris stated she is looking at it from the perspective of the current term.

The following are questions asked of Jill Aitken and her responses (paraphrased):

1. Why do you want to be on the School Board?

She has two very young children, one of which just started preschool. She is just being introduced to the District and SAU41 in general. For her it is a way to get her feet wet, see what the role involves. She sees the School Board as having a critical role, and she would like to get involved early on in her children's career in the District.

She wants to be able to serve the community. She values the strong school system the District has, and she does not want that to be lost. She wants to be involved on a deeper level to ensure the work to maintain and continue to improve the District.

2. What is one item that you would like to see the Board focus on for the upcoming school year?

New to the District, she does not have the intimate knowledge of the current focus as others may have; class size is an issue many have. To continue to ensure openings are filled with the best candidates possible.

3. What is one area that you feel the Board has made a positive impact on in the last year or two?

Ms. Aitken spoke of the hiring of a second Preschool teacher and commented both of the Preschool teachers seem pretty amazing to her. That is not an easy job.

4. What do you believe is the biggest opportunity for improvement for the Brookline School District?

As a new parent coming in and being new to the Town, she was aware of the cooperative school district, but there were several acronyms that she did not know. She suggested an orientation for new parents.

She found the opportunity to sit in on and observe the Preschool to be incredibly helpful in terms of understanding what her child's day would be like.

5. In this role, how do you believe you can influence change?

Ms. Aitken remarked she has a lot of energy, is a positive thinking person, and is very social. Being new to Town she is meeting new people, and as she becomes involved in various aspects of the school and Town it provides an opportunity to pass information along to the community and learn of the needs of the community. She believes she could be helpful in the efforts to increase communication with residents.

6. What is your view on public school?

Ms. Aitken commented she would assume anyone interested in a position on the Board would value the public school system. She had a public school education. Her parents chose where they would make a home based on the public school system. She is of the belief one of the best things we can do for our country, moving forward, is to give our children the best possible education.

When asked if she had any questions of the Board, Ms. Aitken stated her understanding Board members typically serve on 1 or more sub-committees and questioned how the work of the committees gets done, e.g., members do it on their own or during meetings. Chair Maguire responded it can vary based on the sub-committee and the subject matter. A lot of times research has to be done between meetings to ensure they are productive.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG THAT THE BOARD, BY ROLL CALL, GO INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION PURSUANT TO 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 DIGENNARO

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

Yea: Matthew Maguire, Lauren DiGennaro, Kenneth Haag, Alison Marsano, Erin Sarris

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Nay:

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MOTION CARRIED

The Board went into non-public session at 6:37 p.m.

The Board came out of non-public session at 6:46 p.m.

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF REBECCA HOWIE TO THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE SCHOOL BOARD YEAR
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER DIGENNARO

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

Chairman Maguire stated he would notify the candidates of the Board's decision the following day.

Members DiGennaro and Marsano departed at 6:48 p.m.

PUBLIC INPUT - None

PRINCIPALS' REPORT

Principal Dobe spoke of the variety of activities that occur in the schools highlighting those included in the report such as the Memorial Day Program, Grade 5 Ecology fieldtrip, and concerts.

Principal Molinari highlighted events listed in his report such as the Writers' Festival/Book Fair/Art Festival and Math Week.

Principal Dobe noted the information provided by the Business Office relative to the infrastructure grants and Capital Improvement Projects (CIP).

Fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students are in the final week of taking the new Statewide assessment. Principal Dobe commented it has been a very different experience and interesting feedback has been received from students and staff.

Principal Dobe remarked the districts of SAU41 have pulled together to take a close look at and improve what we are doing in terms of socioemotional learning and physical and mental wellness. The District has taken a whole-child approach to education for quite a while.

The search process for a 5th grade teacher was successful.

- Kindergarten Steering Committee
 - Charge
 - Membership

Principal Molinari spoke of the communication included in the [agenda](#) relative to a Kindergarten Steering Committee. Given direction to look into a committee to explore a taxpayer funded full-day program at RMMS, the Administration has proposed membership and charge. Membership includes Daniel Molinari, Principal, RMMS, Ken Haag, Vice Chairman, Brookline School Board, Virginia Commisso, Kindergarten Teacher, Thomas Humphries, Town Selectman, Jaime Pusateri, parent, Franziska Gorski, parent, and 2 additional parent members. The end goal would be bringing forth a warrant article.

Principal Molinari went over the staff listing provided as part of the agenda packet noting a typo.; Occupational Therapist position listed under CSDA. Brittany Curtis is the Occupational Therapist and is split between both schools.

Enrollment is tracking with this time last year. Presently, the Kindergarten runs on 3 full-day teachers with full-day students. Current class size is 17, 17, and 18, and the half-day class is 19. What the structure will be next year is uncertain. There are 24 half-day students enrolled. If running the way it currently is, there would be 14 students in a class in the full-day section and 24 half-day kids.

Last year's model was 3.5 teachers, a half-day section, and so many half-day kids that they were sprinkled into the other full-day classes. That is an option.

This year's model was successful, but it is something that will have to continue to be reviewed along with enrollment figures.

When asked for clarification, Principal Dobe indicated this to be the first time students are taking the new statewide assessment. It is based on and is similar to the Smarter Balanced Assessment, which the District took during the previous three years. When asked if the data that will be gained from the new test is comparable, e.g., will it be able to be used to track students' progress, without interruption, Principal Dobe stated information will be able to be gleaned from it, but it is a different test; different standards, different cut points for proficiency, etc.

DISCUSSION

- Calendar Review - School Board Meeting Dates/Night of Week

Superintendent Corey stated the Administration's request that the Board consider moving its meeting dates to Wednesday's. He spoke of the advantages for members of the Administration to be out a particular night of the week each month rather than different nights on different weeks. Vice Chairman Haag indicated he had adjusted his schedule to fit Tuesday meetings. Wednesdays would be a constant conflict for him.

Superintendent Corey remarked it may be that the Administration makes adjustments that would result in more of a splitting of meetings in terms of attendance. The Board expressed full support of that approach.

Vice Chairman Haag offered to look to see if he could adjust his schedule to accommodate Wednesday night meetings for half of the year. Superintendent Corey noted the Board is required to meet once every two months, and perhaps during the slower times of year, the Board could consider 6 weeks between meetings, etc. He offered to bring forward a few options in time for the next meeting.

- Revenue and Expense Report

Superintendent Corey noted the Expense and revenue Report included with the agenda noting the projected unreserved fund balance of \$162,125 (resulting from expenses running \$73,920.09 below projections and revenue coming in higher than projected at \$88,205.12). Once the allocations are made to the contingency, maintenance, and special education funds, the remaining balance will be \$37,125.

Superintendent Corey commended the Business Office for the efforts to achieve efficiencies/cost savings throughout the year to compensate for the unanticipated special education expense incurred at the start of the year (\$65,889). It is those efforts that allow the District to end the year where it will. When asked, he stated the District was able to avoid utilizing the special education trust to address the unanticipated cost.

DELIBERATIONS

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the Business Administrator's proposal to fund the District's portion of the State security grants.

Superintendent Corey called the Board's attention to the proposal outlining the details of the infrastructure grant. The SAU, as a whole, obtained grants in the amount of \$431,225. The SAU's 20% match equates to \$86,245. The Brookline School District's portion of the grant funds is \$143,175 and the 20% match is \$28,635.

The proposal provided identifies the projects the Administration would like to address with the grant funds, and the source of funding for the 20% match.

MOTION BY MEMBER SARRIS TO ACCEPT AND AUTHORIZE THE EXPENDITURE OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT FROM THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE IN AN AMOUNT UP TO ONE HUNDRED FORTY-THREE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-FIVE DOLLARS (\$143,175) TO ADDRESS INFRASTRUCTURE/SECURITY ITEMS DETAILED IN THE DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED WITH THE AGENDA. SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR THE DISTRICT'S REQUIRED 20% MATCH (\$28,635) ARE THE FY18 BUDGET, EXPENDABLE TRUST, AND ERATE FUNDS

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HAAG

ON THE QUESTION

Vice Chairman Haag questioned the use of eRate funds and was informed they are Federal dollars, which are received yearly and can be utilized for specific things. Last year the wiring at RMMS was done through eRate funds.

Superintendent Corey spoke of the cost savings achieved through bulk purchases of items that will be utilized across the SAU.

MOTION CARRIED

3-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding Policy JKAA - Use of Physical Restraint, Seclusion and Intentional Physical Contact; first reading

Given its first reading:

Principal Molinari stated the existing policy was last approved October 28, 2014. Proposed new language states: "The district must provide annual notification to parents of the district's policy of the use of physical restraint, seclusion and intentional physical contact." Additional new language addresses School Resource Officers (SROs) and emergency responders as well as a paragraph on duty to report violation.

Chairman Maguire questioned if there would be instances where the SRO would be onsite in the District. Superintendent Corey stated there to be the potential for Brookline officers to be in our school buildings. They are not, at that time, employed as an SRO. Not knowing what future direction may be taken in terms of security across the SAU, inclusion of the language would not be harmful.

It was suggested reference to SRO be removed and that the policy be broad enough to cover any emergency responder.

Amendments will be made and brought forward for consideration at the time of the second reading.

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY JKAA - USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT, SECLUSION AND INTENTIONAL PHYSICAL CONTACT, AS PRESENTED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SARRIS

MOTION CARRIED

3-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding Policy JICI - Weapons on School Property; first reading
Given its first reading:

Principal Molinari stated the policy is new to the District. The language was borrowed from the COOP School District policy.

Chairman Maguire stated his belief the language mixes the lines between students and adults. He noted when the school buildings are utilized as polling locations, individuals possessing a concealed carry permit are permitted to carry a firearm into the buildings. He stated uncertainty if individuals are permitted to enter school premises with a firearm if attending a school function, e.g., School Board meeting. Principal Dobe indicated the committee will be looking into the specifics of State law. That information will be reported back to the Board.

Superintendent Corey stated the District cannot develop a policy that contradicts State law. That was unsuccessfully challenged in a school district further north. The District could establish criteria. This is likely a policy that will require more than 3 readings.

Ms. Sarris suggested, the Board reach out to the New Hampshire School Board Association (NHSBA) to determine if the positions are similar and if the Board should look to add its voice to the efforts of the NHSBA.

Chairman Maguire stated his personal feeling; he would not want staff to simply be able to walk around with a weapon, but, under special circumstances, he would not want to rule out that option. He is of the belief one of the worst things the District could do is put a sign up out in front of the school stating it is a gun free zone.

Ms. Sarris commented on the need for the Board to engage in the discussion to reach agreement on where it stands on this policy.

It was noted the references to prior readings, etc. was information pertaining to the COOP School District, and should be removed.

Chairman Maguire stated concern with language that would result in a student who unintentionally violated the policy by bringing an object that is otherwise harmless into the school being suspended for a year. Superintendent Corey noted each instance is viewed on a case-by-case basis and addressed accordingly.

MOTION BY MEMBER SARRIS TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY JICI - WEAPONS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HAAG
MOTION CARRIED
3-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding Policy EFD - School Wellness; first reading
Given its first reading:

Superintendent Corey remarked the policy stems from receipt of Federal funds through the school nutrition programs, which require the District to have a wellness policy as well as a wellness committee. The Wellness Committee has been in place for many years, and the intent is to refine the wellness policy.

The Business Administrator who oversees food service, crafted this policy. She worked with the NHSBA, which provided a template. A good deal of the policy is based on federal requirements.

Principal Molinari noted the committee included representation from each of the schools.

It was suggested the policy could refer to Brookline, Hollis, and the COOP School Districts.

Chairman Maguire suggested indirect reference so that changes in State law, etc. do not require a change to policy. Vice Chairman Haag questioned the use of hyperlinks.

MOTION BY MEMBER SARRIS TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY EFD - SCHOOL WELLNESS, AS PRESENTED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HAAG

MOTION CARRIED

3-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the formation of a Kindergarten Steering Committee

Establishment of the committee would ensure the discussion is captured in meeting minutes and available to the public in accordance with the Right-to-Know Law. Superintendent Corey stated the intent for the Board to be provided periodic updates.

Ms. Sarris commented historically there have been Kindergarten meetings involving parents. She is familiar with some who served on it who have expressed they felt as though their recommendations did not result in change. The formal establishment of the committee shows the vested interest of the District.

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO APPROVE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A KINDERGARTEN STEERING COMMITTEE, AS OUTLINED IN THE COMMUNICATION ATTACHED TO THE AGENDA

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SARRIS

MOTION CARRIED

3-0-0

Chairman Maguire noted, with the departure of Ms. DiGennaro from the Board, there is the need to appoint another as the Brookline School Board representative to the SAU41 Budget Committee.

It was suggested the new member of the Board may have an interest in participating, and that the Board should postpone appointing another until the June meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Brookline School Board April 17, 2018

The following amendments were offered:

Page 5, Line 29; replace “reflects” with “is a reflection of”

Page 7, Line 3; insert the motion “to approve the recommendations of the Superintendent regarding Administrative Compensation”, which was inadvertently omitted from the minutes.

**MOTION BY MEMBER SARRIS TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HAAG
MOTION CARRIED
3-0-0**

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ADJOURN
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SARRIS
MOTION CARRIED
3-0-0**

The May 22, 2018 meeting of the Brookline School Board was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Date _____

Signed _____