

**BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD
ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
APRIL 19, 2023
MEETING MINUTES**

The Organizational Meeting of the Brookline School Board was conducted on Wednesday, April 19, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the Richard Maghakian Memorial School.

Andrew Corey, Superintendent, presided:

Members of the Board Present: Kenneth Haag
 Alyson Manion
 Colleen Micavich
 Tracy Perry
 Kelly Zakar

Members of the Board Absent:

Also in Attendance: Gina Bergskaug, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
 Donna Smith, Assistant Business Administrator
 Daniel Molinari, Principal, Richard Maghakian Memorial School
 Patricia Bouley, Principal, Captain Samuel Douglass Academy

ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL BOARD

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Superintendent Corey called for nominations for Chairman of the Brookline School Board for the 2023-2024 term.

**MEMBER ZAKAR NOMINATED MEMBER HAAG
SECONDED BY MEMBER MICAVICH**

Member Zakar commented where Member Haag is the most senior member of the Board and has successfully led the Board for the past 2-3 years, it is a great opportunity for him to lead once again and give the new members the opportunity to learn. She is grateful he is willing to accept the nomination.

**VOTE ON ELECTION OF KEN HAAG TO THE POSITION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE
BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD FOR THE 2023-2024 TERM
MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0**

Superintendent Corey declared Ken Haag Chairman of the Brookline School Board for the 2023-2024 term.

Superintendent Corey stepped down and Chairman Haag presided.

Chairman Haag called for nominations for Vice-Chairman of the Brookline School Board for the 2023-2024 term.

**MEMBER HAAG NOMINATED MEMBER MICAVICH
SECONDED BY MEMBER ZAKAR**

**VOTE ON ELECTION OF COLLEEN MICAVICH TO THE POSITION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN
OF THE BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD FOR THE 2023-2024 TERM**

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

Chairman Haag declared Colleen Micavich Vice-Chairman of the Brookline School Board for the 2023-2024 term.

Chairman Haag called for nominations for Secretary of the Brookline School Board for the 2023-2024 term.

**MEMBER MANION NOMINATED MEMBER PERRY
SECONDED BY MEMBER MICAVICH**

**VOTE ON ELECTION OF TRACY PERRY TO THE POSITION OF SECRETARY OF THE
BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD FOR THE 2023-2024 TERM**

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

Chairman Haag declared Tracy Perry Secretary of the Brookline School Board for the 2023-2024 term.

Members Manion and Perry were appointed as signers of the manifests and Micavich as an alternate.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

	<u>Liaison</u>	<u>Alternate Liaison</u>
Brookline School District Policy Committee	Kelly Zakar	
Brookline Finance Committee	Alyson Manion	
Teacher Luncheon	Colleen Micavich	
SAU41 Governing Board Policy Committee	Kelly Zakar	
SAU41 Governing Board Budget Committee	Alyson Manion	
Superintendent Performance Evaluation Committee (SPEC)	Kelly Zakar	

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS - None

CORRESPONDENCE / RESIGNATIONS / RETIREMENTS / NOMINATIONS

A letter of resignation was received from Lisa Winters. In her letter, she states that her family will be relocating at the end of this school year. It goes on to state “Please know how much I have appreciated the latitude you have given me over the past several years to work with students of all abilities in a variety of different ways.”

**MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF LISA WINTERS AS A MATH SPECIALIST AT THE RICHARD MAGHAKIAN MEMORIAL SCHOOL WITH AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF JUNE 30, 2023
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ZAKAR**

ON THE QUESTION

Vice Chairman Micavich expressed gratitude to Ms. Winters for her commitment to the students and district commenting that her child loves math because of Ms. Winters.

**MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0**

Nominated for the position of grade 5 teacher was Melissa Palmer. She has her bachelors in elementary education and sociology and her masters in elementary education from Bridgewater State. She has been with the district on an interim basis, and would join the district at a Masters, step 11 and a salary of \$65,760.

**MOTION BY MEMBER ZAKAR TO ACCEPT THE SUPERINTENDENT’S NOMINATION OF MELISSA PALMER FOR THE POSITION OF GRADE 5 TEACHER AT A MASTERS STEP 11 AND A SALARY OF SIXTY FIVE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED SIXTY DOLLARS (\$65,760)
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MANION
MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0**

Melissa Ennulat was nominated for the position of kindergarten teacher. She has her bachelors in music from UMass Amherst and her masters in early child education from Merrimack College. She would be at a Masters step 3 and a salary of \$51,911.

**MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT THE SUPERINTENDENT’S NOMINATION OF MELISSA ENNULAT FOR THE POSITION OF KINDERGARTEN TEACHER AT THE RICHARD MAGHAKIAN MEMORIAL SCHOOL AT A MASTERS STEP 3 AND A SALARY OF FIFTY ONE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED ELEVEN DOLLARS (\$51,911)
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ZAKAR
MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Brookline School Board [February 22, 2023](#)

**MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ZAKAR
MOTION CARRIED
3-0-2**

Members Manion and Perry Abstained

Brookline School Board [March 29, 2023](#)

The following amendment was offered:

Page 5, Line 30, September 4th should be replaced with October 5th.

**MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ZAKAR
MOTION CARRIED**

3-0-2

Members Manion and Perry Abstained

Brookline School Board .- **Non-Public**. [March 29, 2023](#)

**MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ZAKAR
MOTION CARRIED**

3-0-2

Members Manion and Perry Abstained

PRINCIPALS’ REPORT

Daniel Molinari, Principal, RMMS and Patricia Bouley, Principal, Captain Samuel Douglass Academy (CSDA), highlighted items from the report, which was included as part of the [agenda](#) packet.

Principal Molinari noted information provided on enrollment history and spoke of activities occurring within the buildings.

This month is traffic safety month. Students participated in an offsite evacuation (walked to fire station) and some parents participated in a practice of the reunification process. The practice was videotaped and will be used for new staff to see how the drill is done and played at Open House to educate families on the process.

Principal Bouley noted the video will be shared with staff and students at CSDA. CSDA is in discussions with police, fire, and Nashua safety in terms of conducting a similar practice in the June time period.

Highlighted were staffing needs at both facilities.

PUBLIC INPUT

The intent of the public comment period is for the Board to receive input from the public. It is not to be a back and forth discussion. The Board will consider the input provided during the deliberations portion of the agenda.

Chairman Haag declared the period for public input open at 6:21 p.m.

Kirsten Zimmerman, 31 Milford Street

Spoke of a bullying problem at CSDA that is not being addressed. Students in her child's classroom do not feel safe because of one particular student who has bullied on many occasions, physically threatened her child and physically injured a para. This week the child went after another child in one of the specials. She understands the district cannot control the behavior of a child but can anticipate things at times. What really upset her, and her child, was that 15 minutes later when the special was over, the bully was back in the classroom playing video games like nothing was wrong. She was told administrators were not in the building (probably for the practice drill). She questioned the protocol for an instance when there is not an admin in the building.

She learned this week that parents are not allowed to reach out to Board members to talk with them and share concerns. She questioned why.

She questioned why she cannot receive a copy of the student handbook. She tried to obtain one today and was unable to, having been told there was no way of providing that.

Superintendent Corey stated he could not discuss a specific child. He clarified that there is always the opportunity to reach out to a member of the School Board. Typically, if a concern is brought to the attention of a Board member, they then alert the Chairman and that generates a conversation. There are times when a generalized discussion makes it on an agenda. The student handbook is available online, and if unable to be downloaded, a copy should be able to be provided (placed in child's backpack, etc.). There are protocols in place, and he stated a willingness to go over them with her if she wished to contact him via telephone or email. Not knowing the specific circumstances of the incident referred to, it would be inappropriate for him to speak to it at this time. He requested she reach out to further discuss the matter with him.

Member Zakar stated it was her understanding that Board members should not be having one-on-one conversations with parents. She looked to review the policy language to refer her to and was unable to view it. She told Ms. Zimmerman she is not supposed to have conversations with a parent outside of a Board meeting and recommended she either email the Superintendent (copying the Board as a whole) or come and provide public input.

The New Hampshire School Board Association (NHSBA) sent out an email on March 23rd concerning the policy server being down. Another parent reached out to her noting SAU 41 is the only district in the State that uses the NHSBA website to house policy information. She questioned whether there is an alternative solution for policy storage.

Chairman Haag stated residents can always reach out to a member(s) of the School Board. He always asks when parents reach out, if there are particular incidents, whether the administration has been involved as there is a process in place. In regard to bullying, this issue has come up a few times, and it appears to be a big focus this year around social emotional learning and policy. We are seeing this theme and he believes we are on a year-long or longer journey as a Board to help work with Administrators to try to flow that into the schools.

Member Perry asked if the Board could discuss how Board members respond to citizen inquiries. Chairman Haag stated one thing the Board is mindful of is avoiding back and forth communication

concerning matters the Board has oversight of. If an email string consisted of back and forth discussion addressed to what constituted a quorum of the Board, it would be considered an illegal meeting.

Member Zakar remarked she believes it to be common courtesy to reply, thank the individual for reaching out, ask the questions mentioned around whether the issue has been brought to the attention of the building administrator, teacher, Superintendent, etc. At times she has provided a link to a policy or the student handbook. If she believes it is needed, she will copy the appropriate administrator.

Superintendent Corey noted a presentation that will be provided in May. He commented that if something happens at school and you live in the community, it is likely you will be approached in the grocery store. You need to be able to respond. That is small town America and what we expect. It is just a matter of how you respond. This is a great discussion that can be had at the May meeting. The other thing some districts have gone to is one button to communicate with the School Board so that any email automatically goes to all members of the Board, and the expectation is that the Chair will respond. In that way you are not constituting a meeting, but everyone is getting the reply and the Chair either directs it to one of the Principals, etc.

Vice Chairman Micavich spoke of an email she received from a parent who was unable to locate a policy online. She went to search for it, and was able to find it, but the link was not working. The only way she was able to access the policy was through the handbook. She suggested there be a printed copy available for the Board and at the SAU. Superintendent Corey responded there are policy manuals at the SAU and at each of the schools. He commented that this is his 9th year, and it is the first time the policy site has been down. As we look at redoing our website, we could incorporate policies.

Asked, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the district pays dues to be part of the NHSBA. Some of those dues provide free legal services and to have access to sample policies along with policy updates based on legislative actions. They host our policies. We initially went in that direction because we did not have sufficient manpower to maintain the database. We are a little better staffed now than we were 15+ years ago and can look at that again. She has been a part of this district for 18 years and we have never once had a problem. It was kind of a fluke thing for us and not something that we really expected. That email was sent out to Board members that were on their registry at the time. It is noticed on our website that the database is down. It is not something that we have control over, and it does say to come to the SAU office for a paper copy.

We were told to stop making paper copies because of the frequency with which there are changes. There is a policy binder at the SAU office and in each of the buildings.

Asked if they provided a timeline for the server to be back up, Superintendent Corey responded they did; they assured us it would be back up already. It is not. He had not realized that we had become the only remaining district to utilize that service. Understanding that, we are likely not as big a priority to them, and why we will move it in-house as we do the IT upgrade.

Member Manion stated appreciation for the agenda packet including copies of the policies referenced on the agenda. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted the Administration is required to post an agenda. It is not required to provide all of the backup, but a point is made of doing so to streamline the information and make it as transparent as possible.

Chairman Haag noted the SAU retains an electronic copy of the policies.

Chairman Haag thanked Ms. Zimmerman for her input. Vice Chairman Micavich noted a discussion item on the agenda that is more on the general topic.

The Public Input period was closed at 6:51 p.m.

DISCUSSION

- FY23 Revenue and Expense Update

As of 4-10-23, on the expense side of the ledger, the balance is in the negative (\$34,022) due to a good deal of unanticipated costs, e.g., special education, unanticipated legal expenses. On the revenue side, the balance is a positive \$26,927. The end result is an anticipated unreserved fund balance of \$32,398. When looking at the approved allocations to the Maintenance Trust of \$55,000 and Retained Fund Balance of \$140,000, the balance is a negative \$162,602. The proposed solution is to utilize the FY23 Retained Fund Balance (RFB) for the required ADA Project at a cost of \$109,687 and use \$52,916 from the Special Education Trust to cover some of the additional costs in that line. That would result in a projected fund balance of \$0.

Superintendent Corey stated there would be the need to conduct a Public Hearing in May to authorize the expending of funds for the ADA project and from the Special Education Trust. This possibility has been discussed throughout the year. Those numbers will likely fluctuate again come May. If doing nothing, we would finish the year \$32,398 ahead. It is a matter of whether or not the Maintenance Trust and RFB are funded. How you get the RFB is actually by spending the RFB. Basically you have \$140,000 in the FY23 RFB that is not on the Revenue & Expense Report because it can only be used for specific purposes. The ideal purpose is the ADA projects that we are required to do. When you fund the \$109,687 for the ADA projects all of a sudden you will have the ability to have a RFB in FY24.

Chairman Haag commented on the ADA project having been an unplanned expense, which is why it would qualify for use of the RFB. Superintendent Corey stated that to be correct and commented for the new Board members that this has been an ongoing process since about September when the budget was frozen. Special Education costs are the result of move-ins over the summer. Overall, the financial picture is a good deal better than it was in September/October. It is not much different than the position a year ago. For comparison purposes, the Hollis School District is in a slightly better position, but they, like Brookline, have seen massive growth in enrollment, and are running into unexpected costs.

Chairman Haag questioned what drove the unanticipated legal expenses and was told the line represents legal and advertising costs. Legal costs were related to excessive legal services such as Right To Know requests at the start of the summer. The district has had to advertise for vacant positions, the cost has increased as has the amount of advertising.

Superintendent Corey spoke of how strong our hiring pools are. The Curriculum Coordinator position resulted in receipt of 31 applications from qualified individuals. The same situation is being seen with open elementary positions. The most difficult piece we are facing this year is candidates with multiple offers.

- General Assurances

The agenda packet included a copy of the FY24 School District General Assurances.

The district receives Federal dollars via the lunch program, IDEA (special education grants), Title II (professional development), Title IV (activities related to student performance/SEL, etc.), and the Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) (technology). When putting in the grant applications each year, they must include assurances of how the funds will be watched over and the requirements of the grant adhered to. The document provides an explanation of those requirements.

This item will appear under the deliberations section of the May agenda. If approved by the Board, both the Superintendent and Chairman will sign off on the document. For the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent, adhering to the standards is part of their licensing.

- School Calendar - Last Day of School for 2023

Superintendent Corey stated the Administration is proposing and has met the requirements to complete the current school year on June 16th with a half day for the entire SAU. Teachers would finish on June 20th with a professional development day dedicated to school security and safety. That training is videotaped to be used for new hires coming on board or any staff member who may have missed the training.

The proposed calendar for 2023-2024 has not had any changes proposed since the review conducted last month. It has been approved in both of the other districts.

Asked to provide an explanation for parents of why the calendar might identify the 19th as the last day when it may in fact end up being the 16th, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted the district's school day is longer than most in the State. We have 178 days, but then when we look at it all and try to determine at what point we complete our curricular requirements. It makes more sense to have that final day on June 16th with a half day and have an even break on that Friday.

Essentially, we have gone well above and beyond our requirements when hitting that point. There are other factors to consider as well. Less important but something to consider; when we have projects across the district and are trying to complete them in a short 9-10 week period, often times getting started on that Saturday will ensure we can open the buildings when we want to start school.

Superintendent Corey noted there is also a transportation issue; do we want to run the fleet of buses for that one day the following week. A lot of it also functions off of trying to be x number of days after graduation. Finalizing graduation is the decision of the COOP district. We have been pretty good at being right around the anticipated last day because we build it based on five snow days. If we do not have a snow day, we are out earlier than anticipated. We were not that lucky this year.

- CSDA Emergency Occupation Agreement - DECCO

Also included with the agenda packet was the proposed Agreement between the Brookline School District and DECCO, Inc. for Emergency Occupation by Captain Samuel Douglass Academy of DECCO Property During School Evacuation.

As was mentioned during the Principals' Report, CSDA has the option of going to the police or fire stations during evacuations. For the past few years, when drills have been done at CSDA, they have exited the parking lot, and gone down to the first road on the left, which is closed off by the police. Kelly Seeley, Business Administrator, reached out to DECCO, a huge community supporter. They have devised an agreement between the District and DECCO whereby, should the district encounter an emergency any day of the week at any time, they would allow our students to be in their building safe and thereby eliminating

any concerns with weather conditions. They would provide for a much more secure facility, and the ability to utilize parent or bus pickup out of their facility.

Superintendent Corey expressed his gratitude to DECCO for stepping forward for this as it is a facility very close to CSDA. During the drill, the police shut down the entire length of roadway from the school to the fire/police station. Should there be a true emergency, the police would close the street from the entrance side all the way down to Route 13 to give our kids safe passage as there are no sidewalks in that area.

The agreement was drafted by our legal counsel who supports the agreement and believes it to be very comprehensive. In May, the Board will be asked to authorize the Superintendent to sign the Agreement on behalf of the District. That would then become our future emergency evacuation site. If done in May, we will coordinate with DECCO and practice during June.

Member Zakar asked if the facility has an open warehouse space of sorts where students could wait if needing to be protected from the elements.

Principal Bouley noted she toured the facility. Basically they are a training center. Their main facility is in Nashua. They have a lot of training rooms with furniture that could be moved to accommodate all students and staff should an emergency arise and there was the need to go indoors. There are ample bathrooms, we would be able to set up an area for triage, and there are huge garage areas where if we had to rush into a particular space, it would be available. They have fencing and electronic gates that again provide protection. She spoke of appreciation for the tour that was provided and their hospitality to be able to be on call should an emergency arise.

The hope is to conduct a drill in June, which may simply entail having all students and staff walk down, do a count there, and return to the school. After returning from CSDA, there would be parent volunteers to set up the reunification in the parking lot.

Member Zakar commented on the generous nature of the offer from DECCO. Chairman Haag added there is no cost, and the agreement is basically holding them harmless from anything that occurs on their grounds.

Member Manion spoke of her appreciation. She questioned the number of employees they typically have onsite on a given day. Principal Bouley responded that information could be obtained and provided. If doing the drill, they will look to do it on a Friday as they typically work 4 days a week (except for key personnel). Member Manion questioned if there is a protocol to ensure employees are separate from students. Superintendent Corey stated the document is simply addressing the use of the facility. The procedures will outline what occurs when we arrive, which will include staff and students, SAU Administration, police and fire. There will be a separation and each teacher will be with their group of students. It is a large enough facility that we will be able to line up in that way. Additional clarification can be provided next month.

Principal Bouley clarified, ideally this would be a location used as a waiting area until we can have the buses pick us up and take us to the safety complex. In a dire emergency where we need to be indoors someplace quickly, this is when we would utilize their interior. There would be a protocol to ensure separation.

Asked if there is an expiration date associated with the Agreement, Superintendent Corey stated it to be an ongoing relationship with DECCO. He believes we would do some drills, learn something about the process, and if either party has concerns, revisit the document.

- Board Input Regarding a May Presentation on Response to Intervention and Social Emotional Learning

The desire was to engage in a brief discussion to map out what the Board would like to see. From there, the Administration will put a presentation together to be provided at the May meeting. That can be used as the jumping off point of what we would like to see in place for the fall opening.

Vice Chairman Micavich remarked educating the Board and public as to where we are for a baseline for MTSS-B (blends research-based school mental health practices and social-emotional learning with a tiered prevention framework) and how we are intervening with all students who need to be taught social emotional skills on Tier I and then how we are intervening on Tier II and Tier III for students who might be either experiencing bullying or acting out that way themselves. She spoke of having sat in on the interviews for the position of Curriculum Administrator, noting in her 18 years she has never sat in an interview session where almost every candidate had something to offer, and each one was just amazing in many ways. We also have a special education administrator.

Since the last meeting where we talked about horribly racially motivated words being used by students against other students there have been a few additional incidents. She believes when you have a kindergarten age student encouraging a classmate to use the N word that says there is a lack of education most likely in the home, but a lack of education in general everywhere about the impact of that word on a student.

There was another incident where a student referenced another student by their race. It seems there must be a lack of education there. She cannot imagine there was intent. She sat her own daughter down and told her if someone tries to tell you to use that word, absolutely not.

How we are in general making certain our kids feel safe is a bigger discussion as a parent, but also as a special education administrator, and as a Board member. She knows that all of these situations are nuanced, and part of the problem is we cannot share with parents how nuanced they are.

There are ways to do this. It is not as easy as academics. For the public to know that we are really trying to address it is key. Just listening during those interviews she now knows just how much we are already addressing it. She did not know that beforehand.

Member Zakar stated a desire to know how the Choose Love program is presented to the districts and the SAU. There are programs where they come into the school building, but what happens after? During time in the district as a substitute school nurse (HUES) a week or so after the Choose Love program had been in-house, she saw little rubber duckies all over the place (one of their tools). She heard people engaging about them, etc. She questioned how such programs are being operationalized on a daily basis.

Addressing what many people think is the root cause of the epidemic being felt across the country of students feeling unaccepted, bullied, bullying, feeling ostracized, and the mental health crisis, her understanding is that the Choose Love program is meant to try to get to that root cause and give people that foundation. She would like to better understand the program.

She is aware of the Red Tiger Theatre Group and would like to know more about that and any other programs that come into the schools.

Member Manion stated a desire for the Board to go over whatever policies or guidelines that are in place concerning bullying and racism in our schools. She has been able to find a helpful/hurtful guideline but was not able to locate a student code of conduct. If the district does not have one, she would like to open that conversation. Although we cannot discuss particulars, if a family is experiencing an issue in the school, and an investigation determines that bullying has occurred, we should be able to communicate that there are specific nuances that are within a structured age appropriate tiered response of educating our students and managing the situation. She would also like to understand what kind of communication goes out to the school community. We should be able to communicate to the community along the lines of there was an incident that occurred on campus. We do not tolerate this. By our Mission and Vision this is what we are teaching. Please speak to your students about being kind and good community members while at school. Communication like that along with some kind of student code of conduct would at least show our families and school community what the expectations are.

She would like communication to go out to the community, from the Board, advising that we are taking steps to address this.

She proposed the formation of a committee to address bullying and racism and any gaps such as with communication or code of conduct. If we need to develop those tools, she would like to see a committee lead the charge.

Member Perry echoed the remarks of her colleagues. She has read a lot of the emails that community members have written to the Board and listened to public input. Children should feel safe, included, and welcome in our schools. Whether it is a child who does not feel that way and feels the need to act out or a child who is being bullied, both are hurt, and both need our help. We really need to look at what is going on. She would like to see if we could put out some sort of statement and have clear communication plans for when there are incidents of bullying and racism. Communication and transparency do help minimize, especially in a small town, how things can be misconstrued. She would like to see more work done in regard to policies. She is supportive of a student code of conduct. She is supportive of and volunteered to sit on a committee to do the work needed in order to do it well and do right by all parties involved. It may be that this work begins now and continues through the summer so that plan(s) can be rolled out in September.

Member Zakar spoke of the State's passage of the divisive concepts law. She asked if the Principals have observed teachers or adults in the building feeling reluctant to proactively talk about racism, bias, why certain words are unacceptable or certain stereotypes of words are hurtful and what the history behind some of those words is. Especially in a PreK-6 environment, she is uncertain how much any of that would be part of the curriculum. In the upper grades she has heard our teachers testify about the gag order they feel in being able to teach children history. She questioned if it is felt that political aspect has affected it.

Principal Bouley responded she can speak for grades 4-6. She does think that has affected it. She can also speak about her own experience of teaching in grades 3-5. When you are teaching social studies, depending on the topic, you are very careful to stick to the curriculum and if questions become questionable or the discussion is going off topic or too deep, teachers would step back. She thinks they do to protect themselves, but also understand the feelings of parents regarding their right to instruct their own child.

Asked what kind of guidance, training, or support is being given to our teachers to help them navigate these things, Principal Bouley stated Guidance Counselors are a wealth of knowledge and support. Over the past few years, she has taught lessons alongside the Guidance Counselor around bullying, what it means to have friendship, communication, courage, to be an upstander, etc. Those topics are discussed. In October, she worked with a classroom in each grade level to have the students create posters and then skits around the importance of communication, how to be a good friend, what it means to be an upstander. They demonstrated that and performed their skits in front of the whole school during assembly. Through that you got perspectives from grades 4, 5, and 6. The posters were put up in the cafeteria as a reminder of what it means to be a good person, the importance of communication, etc.

Chairman Haag remarked a lot of times our teachers are on the receiving end. We are not teaching these words or racial slurs. Our teachers do not tolerate that. It is not tolerated in the schools. It is a societal piece, what students are seeing on social media, what they are exposed to outside of schools, and we are being reactive to it.

Member Manion remarked not all teachers are comfortable when engaged with different programs or being asked to teach certain concepts of love, kindness, etc. What are the comfort levels of our teachers in the programs that we have in place? There are a lot of young teachers and in that first year nothing exists except how to manage your classroom. Teaching these extra concepts can be uncomfortable for adults too, even at these younger grades with the softer word tones and choices. She would like to see the Administration have an open conversation with teachers concerning that as it may help inform some of the direction that we move in as a district in terms of how we are helping our teachers to teach these concepts.

Chairman Haag commented to him the comparisons of everything are probably a glaring piece that we should look at further. Understanding the difference between bullying at K-6 is an important thing and how we respond to that. He has heard community feedback concerning communication if/when an instance occurs. Perhaps something with social emotional learning on our website that shows all of the different curriculums that we have so that parents can understand that and engage with their children too. There is a lot of good being done in the schools and it will only improve with the Curriculum Coordinator on board. He is encouraged by that.

Superintendent Corey stated the Administration will pull the information together approaching it from different aspects; policy, committee formation, what opportunities may have a budgetary impact, etc.

Asked about the status of the DEI Committee, Superintendent Corey stated that was left with the statement that was brought forward and is posted on the SAU website. The statement was developed through the work of a group of individuals representing both towns and a lot of different viewpoints. At that time, the statement was brought back to the boards and was recognized kind of as an administrative statement that could be used to inform teachers, etc., but it was not adopted by any of the boards.

Superintendent Corey stated he is happy to bring that forward. One statement was made for the SAU, but if a committee is created, that statement could be reviewed and perhaps defined further for Brookline. Many of the committee members are still heavily involved in our schools and he believes they would be happy to pitch in again.

Member Manion commented if having a committee addressing bullying, racism, conduct, that statement could be rolled into the work being done.

Superintendent Corey stated agreement. He added the other thing that occurred at the time the statement was being worked on was COVID. The reality was there was a pandemic going on and efforts to keep schools open along with all of the other work of the districts. He would like this issue to be a significant discussion point on the next agenda.

Chairman Haag remarked, to him, the statement is pretty clear right now that the Board and Administration are behind this. It is likely the entirety of the summer months will be dedicated to rolling something out by the time the next school year starts. He agrees when we talk agenda building it will likely be limited to the Public Hearing and this issue. He stated clearly the Board is endorsing this and will be taking action. It cannot occur overnight, but we are committed to this journey.

Member Manion remarked as a working parent she wonders how many people will see the meeting or read the minutes. She would like to see a communication put out informing residents we are addressing this. Superintendent Corey noted because it would be a statement between the Board and Administration, it should be discussed at the next Board meeting. A draft statement will be brought forward for May.

DELIBERATIONS

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the re-approval of Policy **BCA** – Board Member Code of Ethics.

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG THAT THE BOARD, BY ROLL CALL, STATE AGREEMENT TO ADHERE TO POLICY BCA – BOARD MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MICAVICH

ON THE QUESTION

Vice Chairman Micavich spoke of agreeing with the language of the policy. The language also provides the public with an understanding of the role of a Board member.

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

Yea: Kenneth Haag, Kelly Zakar, Colleen Micavich, Alyson Manion, Tracy Perry

5

Nay:

0

MOTION CARRIED

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the re-approval of Policy **DFA** – Investment

The Board was informed of the State requirement to review the policy on a yearly basis. The intent is to provide an opportunity, at least yearly, to consider investments. In large districts that receive tax dollars in a single transfer, there may be a decision to invest as a means of generating revenue. As identified within the current policy, the School District Treasurer working in conjunction with the Superintendent and his/her designee and pursuant to RSA 197:23-a, is authorized to invest the funds of the District subject to specified objectives and standards of care.

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ADOPT POLICY DFA – INVESTMENT
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ZAKAR

ON THE QUESTION

Superintendent Corey stated this opportunity was really popular when CD rates and those type of short-term investments were very high. We might get back there. In the 9 years he has been in the district, we have not used this because the situation has not warranted it.

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the proposed 2023-2024 school calendar

MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO APPROVE THE 2023-2024 SCHOOL CALENDAR, AS PRESENTED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ZAKAR

ON THE QUESTION

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted June 18th is the last day of school (with five snow days included).

Asked about identifying the date of the Primary as a potential remote day, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted the district is not permitted to do a remote day. Not knowing the date, one cannot be included. The issue can be discussed further when a date is set.

Member Zakar spoke of the discussion around reaching out to the Town to determine if there are alternative polling places. Superintendent Corey stated work is still in process on that. Another question for the Board to consider is whether the library could be used. If we do not want to be in the schools, he respects that; however, he wished to note the library is now a different space, and if the furniture were moved out for the day, people could enter and exit the area. You also suggested it could be approached as a snow day.

Chairman Haag suggested there to be time to consider alternatives and commented it is worth acknowledging that the March date is held this year, which is appreciated.

Member Perry asked for clarification that it is the Town that has to determine where the polling place is. Superintendent Corey responded the Town would decide, but the Board controls the facilities. He does not want to go that route as the relationship is a good one. We do need to address these concerns. It might be as simple as saying we will have a snow day.

Member Perry questioned if the school Board could write a letter to the Selectboard informing them we have given students March 12th off and ask that they look for an alternative location for the Primary.

Chairman Haag responded we can and should ask that a new location be sought. Superintendent Corey stated that would be done and he would look to provide an update at the next meeting.

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

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 (a) THE DISMISSAL, PROMOTION OR COMPENSATION OF ANY PUBLIC EMPLOYEE AND (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 ZAKAR**

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

Yea: Tracy Perry, Alyson Manion, Colleen Micavich, Kelly Zakar, Kenneth Haag
5
Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

*The Board went into non-public session at 7:46 p.m.
The Board came out of non-public session at 8:32 p.m.*

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ADJOURN
SECONDED BY MEMBER PERRY
MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0**

The April 19, 2023 Organizational Meeting of the Brookline School Board was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Date _____ Signed _____