



HARWICH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNCIL

Monday, March 1, , 2021

2:45-4:00 pm

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AGENDA

- [Representatives](#) Introduction (Share your name, connection to HES, and your **favorite childhood book or series**)
- Present: Mary Oldach, Joy Jordan, Scott Carpenter, Karen Booth, Justin Tavano, Meg Shaffer, Kathie Smith, Julia Blois, Pat Smith, Ann Carpenter, Jessica Muldoon, Kara Boule, Sarah Idman, John Larrivee, Angela Porter, Sharon Hughes
- [Approval of Minutes](#)
- Monomoy Elementary School Update, Dr. Scott Carpenter
 - Current regional agreement calls for each town to have their own elementary school. Demographic changes have meant that CES has been reduced from 3 classes per grade to 1 or 2 per grade, with trends indicating 1 (small) class in all grades soon. HES is also decreasing, from 6 classes per grade to 5, but its rate of decrease is much smaller/slower than CES. The MRSD goal is class size of 18+/- to keep classes manageable and

large enough to offer social and academic strength/diversity. One class per grade level becomes a challenge for students and teachers (social and academic for students and teachers don't have peer collaborators). Families were asked to participate in a survey last year on these issues. The School Committee is holding a community forum on these issues on March 4 to get additional feedback from families about how to manage these challenges. There are parallel conversations about the funding disparities these demographic changes result in, but those are separate from the question of what's best for elementary students and teachers. A parent noted there seems to be some that think there's a goal of closing CES. Dr. Carpenter said there is no grand plan to close CES. It's a community conversation and there are discussions that should be had about what's best for students and staff and look at financing separately. Another parent asked if the schools were combined and there was a boom, would HES be maxed out? Depending on the numbers, that's possible. There is a happy medium between 1 class per grade and 6 or 7 per grade level. Dr. Carpenter noted that nothing in the demographic trends, including real estate and other factors, indicates that more young families will start moving here anytime in the future. Real estate costs are just too high for most young families with children and there is no end in sight for that.

- Pool Testing, Dr. Scott Carpenter and Mary Oldach
 - HES held its first day of pooled testing for COVID-19 today. It was super quick and easy per Mrs. Oldach. Dr. Carpenter had sent out videos to help students and teachers know what to expect and how to do the testing. The plan is to continue

weekly into April as the state has extended funding for it until April 18. Once kits were picked up from HES, the central office team scanned in the barcodes to the testing company's website and package for expedited shipping. PreK, K, and 1 students were helped by nurses and grades 2 and up tested themselves. If there is a positive pool, each individual in the pool gets tested to flush out any asymptomatic positive cases, thus limiting spread.

- HES Library Project, Sarah Idman
 - Sarah is managing a project to weed the HES shelves of outdated, damaged, biased, and other books that do not any longer have a place in the school library. She reviewed the holdings and the age of the materials. The HES library has 45 items per student, the current recommendation is to have 15-20 items per student, so there is room to weed out these items without impacting the student experience. The goal is to complete the project by the end of this year, and then have each year be maintenance moving forward.
- “Closing the Equity Gap for Student Achievement”, DRAFT 2020-2022 School Improvement Plan, Mary Oldach
 - Mrs. Oldach reviewed the draft School Improvement Plan and talked about how the vision statement and the district strategic plan play into the SIP. She talked about how equity fits into the plan and how the district is focusing on equity. She noted that it's more than just race, it encompasses culture, gender, and lots of other situations. The opening portion of the SIP will be an infographic giving an overview of HES and the student demographics. By working to ensure that there is equity among all students, SEL growth and academic growth will occur.

Physical health is also important, HES got a grant of approximately \$800,000 to restore and make accessible sidewalks around the school to encourage walking and biking. Equity in mental health and SEL is a focus as well. HES partners with Gosnold for this and plans to re-establish face to face sessions post COVID. HES will also be hiring a second school psychologist soon. Equity in identity development - students need to have a sense of purpose and that their personal identity is valued. New ELA curriculum will focus on windows and mirrors to help ensure that all students see themselves reflected in the works and have the opportunity to learn about others through the works as well.

- Open Discussion, Q&A
 - No comments/questions

2020 -2021 Remaining Meetings:

April 12

May 17