



HARWICH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNCIL

Monday, January 25, 2021

2:45-4:00 pm

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AGENDA

- [Representatives](#) Introduction (Share your name, connection to HES, and your favorite recess game)
 - In attendance: Mary Oldach, Sharon Hughes, Joy Jordan, Angela Porter, Justin Tavano, Ann Carpenter, Sheila House, Kara Boule, Jessica Muldoon, Julia Blois, Kathy Smith, John Larivee, Pat Smith; Katie Cloney and Jackie Cleary joined later in the meeting.
- [Approval of Minutes](#)
 - Sharon moved to accept the minutes; minutes unanimously approved
- School Update
 - Learning Mode Update
 - Mrs. Oldach updated on the survey families completed last December about changing their child's learning mode for the remainder of the year (20 students opted to

transfer from DL to in person, 1 student from in person to DL). Earlier in the fall, a number of students had requested a move from DL to in person (esp K and 1) and those requests had already been accommodated. In Dec the students were largely 3 and 4. To accommodate the requests, some classes were moved to larger classrooms to meet distance guidelines. Currently 400 students in person and 84 DL. A number of families did elect to withdraw for homeschooling the year. Mrs. Oldach anticipates that the majority of those will return to HES in the fall of 2021.

- Budget FY 21 Update
 - Public Budget Hearing will be held Feb. 11. HES budget is a level services budget without major changes from the current year in staffing and class sizes. Some teachers who were DL teachers will return and that will create some movement among staffing (as there will be fewer staff needed when there are no DL classrooms). HES budget looks stable. One section of 3rd will be lost and one in 4th gained so overall staff numbers should balance out.
- COVID Update
 - HES recently had a positive staffer that necessitated three classrooms pivoting to remote learning temporarily. Process went smoothly thanks to 1:1 chromebooks and “go bags” prepared by teachers. Pickup was on MLK Day so learning could happen without gaps.
 - Julia Blois shared about her K class the week that students were remote after break. She said it was a very

different experience from the spring, much more organized, and was glad to be able to work from her classroom even with students remote. Students had spent time learning to log in to various sites so that part went well once they were remote. Glad to be back in person but the remote experience was very positive.

- Katie Cloney noted that parents expected the same as the spring and had to clarify that students were “in class” all day. She said Securly helped a lot ensuring they could log on properly. Enjoyed seeing insight into their families. It also helped her understand which technology skills the students had and which ones they needed to work on.
- Mrs. Oldach thanked the teachers for sharing and expressed her pride in how much the staff has grown their skills and abilities
- Educators are in the next phase of vaccines and it's hopeful that continuing vaccinations will help moving forward.
- Giving thought to February break since the last break saw a spike in cases
- Playground Update
 - HES playground is now a town of Harwich project (since it's town-owned land). Harwich Town Meeting approved \$500,000 CPC grant plus \$80,000 raised by HES PTO. Looking to meet the last gap in funding, hopefully through donation of services from local tradespeople. The plan and goal is for construction to begin the day after school gets out in June, ideally with completion in plenty of time for the start of school in fall 2021.

- HES School Council [Vision Statement](#)
 - Mrs. Oldach thanked Kara, Karen, Sharon, and Joy for working to update the vision statement. Kara read the statement aloud and Mrs. Oldach opened it for feedback from the group. The group liked that the statement touched on equity, diversity, community, the whole child, and both social emotional and academic needs. Julia Blois moved to accept the vision statement as written, Katie Cloeny seconded, approved unanimously.
- School Improvement Plan 2020-2022
 - That vision statement becomes the foundation for the SIP. Mrs. Oldach shared the framework of the SIP. COVID caused the timing of SIP review/revising to be off track. She noted that her focus this year is making sure that everyone is safe and healthy and that both students and teachers/staff have the resources and professional development needed to teach and learn this year. The next SIP will look to the post-COVID era.
 - She shared info and demographics about the current makeup of HES (size of school, numbers of classrooms, ELLs, special education, etc.). She also shared how the SIP (specific to HES) connects to both the Strategic Plan (overarching for district) and to Staff Goals (even more specific). SIP is currently in draft form, focus will be on collective teacher efficacy and culture of trust, equity of access and cultural responsiveness, community involvement and service learning, and social emotional wellbeing.
 - Principal Mary Oldach shared slides referencing SEL (Social Emotional Learning) and the image of a tree with roots and branches showing how our HES SEL programs are intertwined

and based on the CASEL wheel competencies. Asst. Principal Sharon Hughes shared that teachers were trained on the new SSIS-SEL Survey, which will be conducted three-times a year so teachers can assess the social skills of their students and track their progress as well as share data with colleagues to better support students' SEL needs.

- Lastly, Katie Cloney shared that March 2nd is “Dr. Seuss and Community Reading Day” and it would be nice to emphasize literature that highlights equity and diversity among our student body so all students feel “visible and represented.” The council responded well to this and Principal Mary Oldach shared that our HES library is going to be “carefully curated” and go through a “weeding” process so that older books can be surplus and any books with implicit bias will be removed. Ann Carpenter shared her expertise in the process and said that “research has shown even if fewer books are available, students are more eager to take those good books out!” HES Librarian Sarah Ideman will be in charge of replacing and expanding library resources. Parent Jessica Muldoon shared that a Birthday Book Donation was done at her prior district and a book drive like that could help replenish the shelves. Everyone liked that idea. Mary closed the meeting at 3:55.

2020 -2021 Remaining Meetings:

March 1

April 12

May 17