

Hancock School Committee Meeting Minutes
September 5th, 2023

Present: Jim Rodda, Elisa Kryskow, Alex Kastrinakis, Bruce Weiner, Kayt Turner

Also Present: Rebecca Phillips (Superintendent/SPED Director), Jay Merselis (principal), Aldonna Girouard (music teacher), Dave Rash (Emergency Management Director), Devin Lamkey (Occupational Therapist)

1. Call to Order - Alex called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.
2. Public Concerns:
 1. Dave Rash, Emergency Management Director for the town of Hancock. Presented a Hazardous Mitigation Survey- required by FEMA. Includes climate adaptation concerns relevant for the town. Mr. Rash is asking that this survey get dispersed as responses have the Town Meeting have been slow.
3. Correspondence: Email from Jessica Corwin - Chair of Sutherland's School Committee. Information regarding the Rural Schools Bill which is the sequel to Student Opportunity Act of 2019. The Rural Schools Bill will provide additional funding and equity for rural schools. Hancock School Committee will review Ms. Corwin's email and discuss her requests at the October 3rd meeting.
4. Review/Approval of Minutes: Kayt- 1st, Bruce- 2nd, to approve August 8th, 2023 minutes. All in favor.
5. Meet and Greet with new staff/teachers
 1. Jackie Duffy, Speech and Language Pathologist, Charleston SC. Tu/We mornings via telehealth.
 2. Aldonna Girourd, music teacher, led a short and engaging music lesson for us. She will be splitting time between Hancock and Savoy.
 3. Devin Lamkey, Occupational Therapist, short intro on "What is OT?"
6. Executive Session: Each member role called into Executive Session, beginning at 6:31pm. Each member role called back into School Committee at 6:49.
7. Principal's Report:
 1. Accolades and Happenings:
 1. New staff and teachers have started of excellently and energetically
 2. North Adams Public School system Food Service Team has been wonderful to work with. The kids and families are wholly pleased with the Breakfast and Lunch Program. We have a driver *and* a location for compost (pigs!)
 2. Enrollment:
 1. Starting the school year with 59 students. No change in in-district/school choice ratio. A good number of Pre-K students will likely move into the Kindergarten program next year.
 3. Building Projects:
 1. Entryway and doors have worked out well. Outer door is unlocked to vestibule. Main door to building is open during school start and end times, but is primarily locked the remainder of the time. Still working on how to install shades, and if they're necessary.
 2. Chimney: brick is starting to disintegrate. This has been addressed with the Selectman's Board and this will be a town project.
 3. Septic System pump-out, will be making this a yearly task.
 4. Upcoming Events/Schedules:
 1. HOPE willing to support some field trips (Hilltop Orchards, etc). (Mr. Merselis looking for funding from the Mass Cultural Counsel for an in-school theater program - this is a pay up from and get reimbursed later. Again, HOPE is willing to donate).
8. Superintendent's Report

1. Identified a need for \$3,178 to go toward specialized transportation. Jim motioned to approve a line transfer from SPED transportation line to special arrangement transportation line. Bruce - 2nd, All in favor.
 2. Residency Confirmation and Tuition Process: Selectboard's concern with who is responsible for overseeing that any student who relieves tuition to outside schools is qualified
 1. Rebecca's written response
 3. Data Collection including early literacy screening (a new tool approved by the state: DIBLES)
 4. Mandated Training modules/PD activities (Extra emphasis on changes in the handbook and bullying prevention plan review)
9. SPED report
1. SLP discussion re: telehealth. Our best (and only) option at this time.
 2. Pre-K - 6th grade Enrollment numbers: 13 on IEP, 6 of whom on related services only (meaning speech, OT, etc.).
 3. Two videos used as PD training/activities: 1) Inclusion Makes a World More Vibrant. 2) Understanding body language and supporting the kids in their own connections to their emotions.
10. Financial Report
1. Reviewed
11. New Business: Bruce brought up the idea of giving a facelift (perhaps a student mural?) to the front of the building.
12. Kayt motioned to adjourn 7:52. Elisa - 2nd, all in favor.