Hancock School Committee Meeting Minutes

May 6th, 2025

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

Also Present: Rebecca Phillips (Superintendent/SPED Director), Jay Merselis (Principal)

1. Call to Order - Kayt called the meeting to order at 6:05pm
2. Public Concerns: None
3. Correspondence:
   1. Letter from the Selectboard regarding MCAS scores.
      1. Discussion re: demoralizing and disrespectful comments about faculty and principal when the faculty climate at Hancock is incredibly positive across the board. Recommendation is for response to proceed through school lawyer.
4. Approval of minutes:
   1. Alex motioned to approve 4/1/25 minutes. 2nd- Kayt. All in favor.
   2. Alex motioned to approve 4/1/25 Budget Hearing minutes. Jim- 2nd. All in favor.
5. Principal’s Report:
   1. Accolades and Happenings
      1. Thank you to Alex for his lengthy and dedicated work to the School Committee and overall community.
      2. Beauty and the Beast was a resounding success. Many town members were heard discussing the joy of the play at Town Meeting.
         1. Letter from Samantha Lincoln and Amanda Lahey for their appreciation of support from school.
      3. Swim Program as an excellent opportunity for the kids
         1. Letter from Samantha Lincoln with appreciation of support from school.
   2. Enrollment is consistent at 48
   3. Vote for 2025-2026 Academic Calendar
      1. Alex made the motion to approve the calendar. Jim- 2nd. All in favor.
   4. School Choice Participation Vote
      1. Alex made the motion to not accept school choice at this time due to pending status of Home Run Bill. 2nd- Elisa. All in favor.
   5. Student Assessment Data
      1. Continuing to collect benchmark data 3x/yr to drive tailored education. Discussion and further knowledge regarding how our scores stack up against neighboring towns and overall state percentages.
   6. Upcoming Events/Schedules
      1. May 12:11:30 dismissal followed by staff PD (town voting at school, 12:00-6:00)
      2. MCAS: May 13, 14 Emerald Room, May 15, 16 - Diamond Room, May 20, 21 - Emerald Room STE
      3. Ramblewild: May 14 - K-4, May 15 - 5-6
      4. \*\*May 18: Plant Sale at school
      5. May 20-23: Grade 6 to Cape Cod
      6. May 21: PreK-2 to Clark Art, 9:30-12:30
      7. May 26: Memorial Day - school closed
      8. May 29: K-6 to Springfield Museums
      9. June 3: Dental hygienist returns for individual cleanings/checkups (parents signed up)
      10. \*\*June 12, 6th grade graduation starts at 12:30
      11. June 16 Jiminy barbecue and pool party
      12. June 17, last day! 11:30 dismissal, NO afterschool available
      13. June 18 - faculty last day
          1. \*\* indicates relevance to school committee\*\*
   7. Miscellaneous
      1. 3/4 Teacher Position Opening has been posted to iberkshires.
6. Superintendent’s Report:
   1. Home Run Bill Update
      1. Rep Barrett hopeful that our bill will be heard this summer. Dr. Phillips asking for written testimony to help move this critical legislation forward.
   2. Out of state/out of district preschool tuition policy and contract discussion and vote.
      1. Kayt made a motion to move the policy to first read. Jim- 2nd. All in favor.
   3. Out of state tuition policy and contract discussion and vote.
      1. Elisa made a motion to move this policy to first read. 2nd - Alex. All in favor.
7. SPED Director Report
   1. Additional information on strengths of faculty and staff (5 MTEL’s accomplished by a single teacher in just a few weeks; widespread Wilson training this summer; RTI doing additional support in early education room; the science of reading consult; etc.)
   2. FY26 3 year cycle for special ed and civil rights audit. Some of this will be onsite (on site the week of June 1st, 2026.
8. Awarding of the Nellie Cameron and Mary Ellen Donna Scholarships
   1. Bruce motions that the scholarships will be awarded equally amongst the 4 applicants. Elisa- 2nd. All in favor. Alex and Kayt abstained from the vote.
9. Financial Report - Reviewed
10. New Business
    1. Based on some conversations at last night’s town meeting, Jim inquired about the idea of utilizing the school as Town Hall space if/when we have an addition built.
11. Katy motioned to adjourn at 8:15, Alex - 2nd. All in favor.