

Hanover School Committee Meeting Minutes
February 28, 2024, 7:00 PM
In-Person and Virtual Meeting
Hanover High School; Media Center

Present: Mrs. Kristen Cervantes, Mrs. Ryan Hall, and Mrs. Libby Corbo

Absent: Mr. Pete Miraglia, and Mrs. Jaclyn Jorgenson

Also Present: Mr. Matt Ferron, Mrs. Debbie St. Ives, Mr. Michael Oates, Ms. Kaitlin Morelli, Mr. Matthew Mattos, Mrs. Jane DeGrenier, Mr. Jesse Craddock, Mr. Dan Birolini, Mr. Matthew Plummer, Miss Bella Ciccolo, Mr. Matthew Harden, Mr. Aiden O'Connor

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM by Chair Cervantes. Mrs. Cervantes requested a motion to open the *February 28, 2024, School Committee meeting*. The motion was moved by Mrs. Hall and seconded by Mrs. Corbo. The motion carried unanimously.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Bella Ciccolo, High School Sophomore, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Matthew Mattos introduced Bella Ciccolo. He shared that Bella is a highly talented sophomore at HHS attending the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Foundation (HOBY) Leadership Conference in June at Bentley University. The HOBY Leadership Conference is a nationally known conference for younger students demonstrating exceptional leadership skills in their respective school communities. Bella is a member of our Student Advisory Council and a Cedar School mentor. She works with the Partnership in Arts classes and volunteers to mentor 1st graders in the Hanover Park and Recreation Summer Programs. Bella is taking AP US History 2 and Honors level Algebra, English, Chemistry, and French, where she has immersed herself in learning the language as well as hosting one of the students during the French Exchange Program, and will be going to France later this school year to complete the exchange. Athletically, she is a member of the Field Hockey, Outdoor Track, and Indoor Track teams and is part of TWO School Record-holding relay teams for the 4X400 and 4X800 in Indoor Track.

2024 MMEA All-State Concert Band: Aidan O'Connor

Mr. Matthew Harden introduced Aidan O'Connor, a senior in the music program who has been playing the trombone since middle school. He auditioned and was selected to be part of the 2024 Massachusetts Music Educators Association Allstate Concert Band. These are the best students in the State, and they qualify by auditioning at the district level in the fall. If they get a high enough score, the top 50% of each instrument, they can audition for All-State. Aiden learned the piece, went to the audition, and qualified for participation in the Allstate Festival. He will rehearse for a day and then perform at Symphony Hall at the end of the month. He will work under Dr. Eric Leprade from the College of New Jersey.

Public Comment: None at this time.

Approval of Minutes:

December 6, 2023: The December 6, 2023, School Committee Open Session Minutes were tabled for a future meeting.

January 3, 2024: The January 3, 2024, School Committee Open Session Minutes were tabled for a future meeting.

January 17, 2024: The January 17, 2024, School Committee Open Session Minutes were tabled for a future meeting.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT:

- **Events and Updates Presented by Mr. Matthew Ferron:**

Mr. Ferron highlighted some fundraisers, past and upcoming events in the District. He encourages families to check the school calendars for event updates in each school.

Questions/Comments: None at this time.

- **School Committee Policy Review of JJH & JJH-R Presented by Mrs. Kristen Cervantes:**

Mrs. Cervantes shared that the actual policy that was worked on, reviewed by the Committee, and approved "in form" did not get into the official manual that was approved and put into action. Mrs. Cervantes explained that this policy is what the Administration has been operating on. She added that it is not a change from what has already been discussed; it is just housekeeping. She is asking the Committee to approve this policy so it can be added to the policy manual, which is live.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Corbo asked about the empty spot for the number of days. Mrs. Cervantes responded that it should be 30 days. She will table this agenda item until the next meeting, during which she will supply a copy of JJH with the number of days on it.

- **Superintendent's Goals: Mid-year Update Presented by Mr. Matthew Ferron, Mr. Michael Oates, Mrs. Debbie St. Ives, and Ms. Kaitlin Morelli:**

Mr. Ferron explained that every year a Mid-Cycle Progress Report of the Superintendent's Goals that were approved in the fall are given to the Committee. He shared that although these are the Superintendent's Goals, these are Administration and Leadership Goals for the District as well and the Leadership Team has a role in these goals.

An update for each goal was presented as follows:

Goal 1: District Improvement: Successfully Establish a Collaborative Five-Year Funding Strategy - Mr. Oates.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Corbo commented that because of the override budget, there has been increased scrutiny, data analysis, and the level of responsiveness that has not happened in past years when the budget amount was less variable. She commended Mike, Matt, and Debbie for the work that they have done on the budgets, which has been incredibly time-consuming, and for doing a professional job that has instilled confidence not only in our board but also in the Select Board and Advisory Committee.

Goal 2: District Improvement/Student Achievement: Ongoing Successful Implementation and Monitoring of Literacy Curriculum - Mrs. Debbie St. Ives.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Corbo asked if any changes were made as a result of the surveys and if there were any areas that needed to be tweaked. Mrs. St. Ives replied that feedback was received and it has been discussed. Some adjustments to the professional development plan moving forward have been made.

Mrs. Hall asked if all grade-level students were asked. Mrs. St. Ives responded that it was all sixth-grade students.

Goal 3: District Improvement: Successfully plan for Implementation of the new DESE IEP Format - Ms. Kaitlin Morelli.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Hall appreciated the opportunities in trainings for staff, especially training all of the teachers knowing that every teacher, not just special education staff, will be trained so that they understand how to read it, and fill out the forms that go along with it. She added it is important that every person that works with these students are involved.

Goal 4: District Improvement: Successful Participation and Completion of Tiered Focus Monitoring (TFM) - Ms. Kaitlin Morelli.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Cervantes thanked Ms. Morelli and the team for all the work done and for being so transparent. She added that these four areas will help the district grow and be stronger.

Mrs. Hall added that it is excellent to have summaries and clear bullet points for the committee, parents, and staff so everyone is aware of the same conversation and transparency and that these areas can be strengthened. She appreciates the time the district took to make this happen quickly.

Goal 5: District Improvement: Successful Establishment of Student Advisory Council - Mr. Matthew Ferron.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Cervantes added that there is an eighth-grade civics project where students can think critically about something in their world that they would like to change. She received several emails with suggestions and went to the middle school today to meet with those students and answer their questions. She added that she was able to bring that to the Student Advisory Council yesterday morning. Mrs. Cervantes thinks the student voice perspective is just one example of an excellent job being done. She shared that one of the trends heard from families and staff members is homework and the expectations for homework across the district. Mrs. Cervantes shared that she and Mr. Ferron will have a more efficient conversation to review the homework policy. Mr. Ferron added that everyone is not saying they do not want homework and that it was more of a strategic approach to what homework could be.

Mrs. Corbo commented that she remembers one of the suggestions was to limit the days on which homework could be assigned based on the student's schedule and rotating days.

Mrs. Hall commented about having all the stakeholders involved in the conversation and recognizing that the students, the parents, the teachers, the administration, or all those stakeholders in that conversation and hearing those voices are essential.

The [Superintendent's Mid-Cycle Progress Report](#) can be found on the Hanover Public Schools website.

The Superintendent's Goals for 2023-2024 were presented and approved at the [School Committee meeting on October 11, 2023](#).

REPORT OF FINANCE DEPARTMENT

• **FY25 Budget Update Presented by Mr. Michael Oates:**

Mr. Oates shared that the Advisory Committee has supported the budget. He added that in addition to their three meetings, they have spent a considerable amount of time at their recent meetings going over the school budget. Mr. Oates also added that last week, they voted to support the budget lines as part of the larger town operating budget, which will go before a town meeting in May, and that this is an essential step in the budget process. Mr. Oates thanked the Advisory Committee for their work, questions, and feedback, which were taken very seriously by the entire team.

Questions/Comments: None at this time.

• **HHS Athletics Fees Update/Analysis Presented by Mr. Michael Oates:**

Mr. Oates presented a draft memo in the packets and asked the Committee to review it, provide feedback and suggestions, and decide how to proceed. He worked with the athletic director, Mr. Hutchison, who is happy to come to a meeting to discuss this and answer any questions.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Cervantes commented that she wanted to wait until the whole Committee was present so they could also provide feedback.

REPORT ON TEACHING AND LEARNING:

• **Tiered Focus Monitoring (TFM) Update Presented by Ms. Kaitlin Morelli:**

Ms. Morelli presented the Tiered Focus Monitoring Update while reviewing Goal 4: District Improvement: Successful Participation and Completion of Tiered Focus Monitoring (TFM).

Questions/Comments: None at this time.

ACTION ITEM:

• **2023-2024 Homeschool Approval Presented by Mrs. Debbie St. Ives:**

Mrs. St. Ives presented an additional request for homeschooling. It is a new request for one student which was written in a manner that is consistent with a homeschool plan and all the required elements and criteria. Mrs. St. Ives recommends this student be approved for Home School.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Corbo asked if this family plans to continue to homeschool next year. Mrs. St. Ives replied that is the plan.

Mrs. Cervantes entertained a motion to approve the additional *2023-2024 Home School Request* as presented in the memo dated February 28, 2024. The motion was moved by Mrs. Hall and seconded by Mrs. Corbo.

The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None at this time.

The next School Committee meeting is on **March 13, 2024**. Expected agenda items: Student Recognitions, FY25 Transportation Contract Vote, FY24 Donations, and others TBD.

Approved 4/10/24

Mrs. Cervantes entertained the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m. The motion was moved by Mrs. Hall and seconded by Mrs. Corbo. The vote carried unanimously.

For more details, please watch the [February 28, 2024, School Committee Meeting](#) on the Hanover Public Schools website.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Tahnee Warner

Tahnee Warner
Executive Assistant/ Recording Secretary

Documents Used:

[Appendix A School Committee Policy Review of JJH & JJR](#)

[Appendix B Superintendent's: mid-year update](#)[Appendix C - MCAS Presentation \(2023\)](#)

[Appendix C HHS Athletics Fees Update/Analysis](#)

[Appendix D 2023-2024 Homeschool Approval](#)