

Hanover School Committee Meeting Minutes
March 13, 2024, 7:00 PM
In-Person and Virtual Meeting
Hanover High School; Media Center

Present: Mr. Pete Miraglia, Mrs. Ryan Hall, Mrs. Kristen Cervantes, Mrs. Libby Corbo, and Jaclyn Jorgenson

Absent: None.

Also Present: Mr. Matt Ferron, Mrs. Debbie St. Ives, Mr. Michael Oates, Ms. Kaitlin Morelli, Mr. Matthew Mattos, Mr. Jesse Craddock, Mr. Dan Birolini, Mr. Matthew Plummer, Mr. Dante Heffron, Mrs. Jaclyn Rooney, Mr. Declan O'Malley, Mrs. Bartolotti, Mrs. Ryan, Mr. Scott Hutchison, Miss Emma Leonido, Mr. Anthony Mann, Miss Natalie Mutschler, Ms. Sophia Foley, Ms. Janet Curley, and Mr. Michael File.

Call to Order: Chair Cervantes called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Mrs. Cervantes requested a motion to open the *February 28, 2024, School Committee meeting*. Mrs. Hall moved the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Miraglia. The motion carried unanimously.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Declan O'Malley, Kindergarten Student, Cedar Elementary School.

Mr. Jesse Craddock briefly introduced Declan O'Malley, a kindergarten student in Mrs. Bartolotti's homeroom, before Declan led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MIAA Athlete Recognitions: Wrestling: MIAA Girls Division 3 State Champion and New England runner-up, Emma Leonido, Class of 2027; Wrestling: MIAA Division 3 State Champion, Captain Anthony Mann, Class of 2024; Indoor Track: MIAA Division 4 Indoor Track & Field State Champion, Captain Natalie Mutschler, Class of 2024.

Mr. Scott Hutchison gave a brief introduction and presented each athlete with a commemorative plaque.

Public Comment: None at this time.

Approval of Minutes:

December 6, 2023: Mrs. Cervantes entertained a motion to approve *December 6, 2023, School Committee Open Session Minutes* as written. Mrs. Hall moved the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Miraglia. The motion carried unanimously.

January 3, 2024: Mrs. Cervantes entertained a motion to approve the *January 3, 2024, School Committee Open Session Minutes* as written. Mrs. Hall moved the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Miraglia. The motion carried unanimously.

January 17, 2024: Mrs. Cervantes entertained a motion to approve the *January 17, 2024, School Committee Open Session Minutes* as written. Mrs. Hall moved the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Miraglia. The motion carried unanimously.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT:

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

Mr. Ferron highlighted some fundraisers and 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.

- **North River Collaborative (NRC) Budget Update Presented by Mr. Matthew Ferron:**

Mr. Ferron gave a brief overview of the North River Collaborative FY25 Budget.

Questions/Comments: None at this time.

REPORT OF FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Oates introduced Sophia Foley, High School Senior, interning with Mr. Oates and Ms. Gerrish.

- **Annual District School Choice Vote Presented by Mr. Michael Oates:**

*Action Item presented out of order.

Mr. Oates explained that the inter-district school choice program under G.L. c. 76, § 128 allows families to enroll their children in schools in communities other than the city or town where they reside. The sending district pays tuition to the receiving district. Districts may elect not to enroll school-choice students based on available space, class size, staffing, etc. He added that every year, the Committee must vote before June 1 about whether the District will accept school choice students for the 2024-2025 school year. The results of the vote must be summarized and filed with DESE. Based on current enrollment and class size, voting “No” for School Choice for the 2024-2025 school year is recommended.

Questions/Comments:

Mr. Miraglia asked what the reimbursement was from the sending district. Mr. Ferron responded that it is \$5,000. Mrs. Corbo added that she believes the per-pupil spending is three times that, so getting reimbursed \$5,000 is extremely low, which does not foster an environment conducive for schools to participate in.

Mrs. Cervantes commented that there are ways to limit the number of students in X grade, etc.; however, given the potential class size challenges and the added cost, this isn't an option for the district.

Public Comment: None at this time.

Mrs. Cervantes entertained a motion, pursuant to MGL Ch. 76 Section 12B, for the Hanover School Committee to choose not to participate in the School Choice program for the 2024-2025 school year due to high enrollment and class size limitations. Mrs. Hall moved the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Miraglia. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Mr. Oates shared a brief update that the article was presented to the Select Board and will be included in the warrant. Next is a meeting with the Advisory Committee. He added that, as was shared before, the article is for \$400,000, which will get the district on a more consistent device and infrastructure renewal schedule. Mr. Oates will update the Committee as the Town Meeting approaches.

- **HHS Athletics Fees Discussion Presented by Mr. Michael Oates and Mr. Scott Hutchison:**

Mr. Oates and Mr. Hutchison opened the discussion for feedback from the Committee regarding an increase to athletics fees as outlined in the [Athletics User Fee Proposal](#) posted under Public Meeting Documents on the School Committee website.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Hall, Mrs. Corbo, Mrs. Jorgeson, Mrs. Cervantes, and Mr. Miraglia inquired about the number of athletes that participate, how many hit the family cap, how many are in more than one sport, the driving factor that caused the deficit, compared with surrounding towns and if we are in line, and clarification of the fee breakdown, and the possibility of a staggered implementation. Mr. Ferron, Mr. Oates, and Mr. Hutchison responded to those questions and added that the fee has remained the same since the fee went down ten years ago.

- **FY25 Transportation Contract Vote Presented by Mr. Michael Oates:**

Mr. Oates shared that pursuant to M.G.L. c. 308, the Hanover Public Schools entered into a competitive bidding process for Regular Education transportation, Field Trips, and Athletic Events for FY 2025 - FY 2027 with options for FY 2028 and FY 2029. According to the bid documents, bids were received and opened at noon on Thursday, December 21st. Ingle Bus Company was the only bidder. Thus, they have provided the Hanover Public Schools with the best price for the transportation contract.

The total transportation cost for the three years is estimated at \$4,686,217.50, which includes all K-8 transportation and our mid-day kindergarten routes. The \$1,471,230 cost for the 2024-2025 school year matches the amount we have allocated in the FY 2025 operating budget.

Mr. Oates respectfully requests that the Hanover School Committee vote to award the contract for Regular Transportation, including Field Trips and Athletic Events, to Ingle Bus Company for FY 2025 - FY 2027. At this time, in FY 2027, we can consider whether or not to exercise our fourth and fifth-year options or re-bid the contract.

Questions/Comments:

Mrs. Corbo inquired about substitute coverage and ensuring sufficient drivers are available if something unexpected happens. Mr. Oates replied that it was in the bid document that went out.

Mr. Miraglia asked for clarification on the increase in the school budget request, and Mr. Oates replied that it does match.

Mrs. Hall inquired as to why Ingle Bus was the only bidder. Mr. Oates responded that two bus sales companies attended the open bid period. He added that they both shared the ability to access a fleet of buses in a short period. Still, the more significant issue was drivers' availability and ability to train drivers.

Mrs. Cervantes entertained a motion to award the *Transportation Contract including field trips, and athletic events as presented in the memo dated March 8, 2024 to Ingle Bus Company*. Mrs. Hall moved the motion, which Mr. Miraglia seconded. Roll call vote: Pete Miraglia-Aye, Ryan Hall-Aye, Kristen Cervantes-Aye, Libby Corbo-Aye, and Jacky Jorgenson-Aye. The motion carried unanimously.

REPORT ON TEACHING AND LEARNING:

- **2024-2025 HHS Program of Studies (POS) Presented by Mrs. Debbie St. Ives, Mr. Matthew Mattos, Mrs. Jaclyn Rooney, and Mr. Matthew Plummer:**

Mr. Plummer and Mrs. Rooney shared that the redline version of the [2024-2025 HHS Program of Studies](#) has been posted under Public Documents on the School Committee page on the Hanover

Public School Website. They explained that grades 8 – 11 will begin the process of picking classes. Mr. Plummer and Mrs. Rooney reviewed the updates and changes and the reasons they were made in the Program of Studies.

Questions/Comments:

Mr. Ferron expressed his gratitude to Mr. File and Ms. Curley, as he was impressed with the program studies. He added that the collaboration, innovation, and vision for the future were incredibly impressive.

Mr. Heffron commented that taking any art classes to graduate is optional. He added that many surrounding schools require some of those classes. Mr. Plummer responded that they are reviewing that right now. Mr. Ferron said that it could be a goal for next year.

Mrs. Cervantes shared her appreciation of the Program of Studies and felt there was something for everyone.

Mrs. Hall appreciated the addition of personal finance and the opportunity of the internship to explore different areas of interest. She added that she appreciates all that is offered in the Arts.

Mr. Miraglia commented that we need to support teachers in recognizing AI and inquired about the difference between AP and Honors. Mr. Plummer explained the differences.

Mrs. Jorgenson asked if there is a grade prerequisite or teacher recommendation to get into an AP course. Mr. Plummer replied that there is no longer a prerequisite but that there are teacher recommendations to which they try to adhere. Mrs. Jorgenson likes that the summer work is called out to clarify the expectations. Mr. Plummer replied that all AP courses required summer work. Mrs. Jorgenson added that she feels summer reading is essential and asked if it is required for all levels.

Mr. Plummer answered that it is only required for AP courses but strongly recommends it for everyone. Mrs. Corbo asked if the Art Appreciation Course has a project-based element, and she added that she is open to discussing implementing requirements for a more passive art course for students who are not confident in their art skills or abilities but would like some enrichment.

Mr. Heffron added that the requirement for Arts should not be to a crazy quota.

Mrs. Corbo inquired about ASL, and Mr. Plummer responded that they could not find someone to teach it, but they continued to look.

ACTION ITEM:

- **Annual District School Choice Vote Presented by Mr. Michael Oates:**

Presented out of order under the Report of the Finance Department.

- **HMS 7th Grade Canobie Lake Park Field Trip Request Presented by Mr. Dan Birolini:**

Mr. Birolini shared that the seventh-grade science teachers set up practice things to do in class, test them out, and spend the day at the amusement park to pick out different rides and how they fit. He added that they come back and have an activity that they do along with that. Mr. Birolini is seeking the Committee's approval because it is out of state, which is a better bang for the money than to go to Six Flags. The teachers want a great end of the year for the seventh graders.

Questions/Comments:

Mr. Miraglia and Mrs. Jorgeson support the trip.

Mrs. Cervantes entertained a motion to approve the *HMS 7th Grade Canobie Lake Park Field Trip Request* as presented. Mrs. Hall moved the motion, which Mr. Miraglia seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None at this time.

The next School Committee meeting is on **March 27, 2024**. Expected agenda items: Events & Updates, School Committee Policy Review of JJH and JJH-R, Superintendent Evaluation Timeline Approval, FY24 Q2 Revolving Account Report, FY24 Donations as of 3/22/24, Student Opportunity Act (SOA) Plan, 2023-2024 School Calendar 1.0, 2023-2024 Last Day of School Vote, and others TBD.

Mrs. Cervantes entertained the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 p.m. Mrs. Hall moved the motion, which Mr. Miraglia seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

For more details, please watch the [March 13, 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 is the FY25 Transportation Contract Vote](#) - Approved

North River Collaborative Proposed FY25 Budget

Contract for Student Transportation Services

[Appendix B 2024-2025 HHS Program of Studies](#)

[Appendix C HMS 7th Grade Canobie Lake Park Field Trip Request](#) - Approved