

SOUTHAMPTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Southampton Town Hall

March 13, 2024

Attending: Jon Lumbra, Chair; Margaret Larson; Dylan Mawdsley; Kim Schott

Not Attending: Julianne Tauscher

Administration Present: Superintendent Bonneville; Principal Pluta

Guests: Alice Bedecker, Stephanie Cho; Jennifer Johnson

Documents Reviewed

Draft February Minutes

Superintendent's Report

Principal's Report

Draft FY25 Calendar

I. **Call to Order:** Jon Lumbra, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

II. Routine Matters

- A. Approval of Minutes - Mr. Mawdsley moved to accept the February 14 minutes as corrected. Ms. Larson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- B. Public Comment - Parent Alice Bedecker requested a change in the policy and procedures for external groups using Norris facilities. Ms. Larson moved that Policy KF be reviewed by the Superintendent and District attorney and that the Committee will follow up through the Superintendent. Ms. Larson seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously in favor of the motion. The motion passed.
- C. Warrants - Mr. Lumbra reported having signed off on the warrants.
- D. Announcements/Correspondence - Mr. Lumbra reported having received correspondence that will be shared at the Executive Session.

III. Reports

- A. Principal's Report - See attached.
- B. Superintendent's Report - See attached.
- C. Chair's Report - Mr. Lumbra reported a very fluid situation and a primary focus on the budget.
- D. Hampshire Regional School Committee - Ms. Larson reported that the Committee's work has focused on the budget and superintendent search.
- E. PTO - Ms. Schott reported that the PTO's fundraising efforts have been very successful. Their new focus is on recruitment.
- F. School Council - Ms. Larson reported that the Council is working on the School Improvement Plan and the development of associated action items.
- G. Collaborative for Educational Services Update - Deferred.
- H. Select Board Update - Mr. Lumbra reported that he has asked for a list of specific items needed to close the books. This list has been shared with Superintendent Bonneville and Assistant Superintendent Rickson.

IV. Budget

- A. FY25 Preliminary Budget - Mr. Lumbra reported having received notification from Business Manager Buhl that he is unable to attend and present the preliminary budget at tonight's meeting.
- B. Potential Outcome Should No Budget Be Proposed - Mr. Lumbra emphasized the importance and urgency of proposing a budget for voter consideration. Should a budget fail to be proposed, the Commissioner of Education would propose one subject to adjustment. The Committee discussed the logistics of completing the budget including, but not limited to, its development, public notice, public hearing, and presentation to the Town's Select Board hearing on March 29. The Committee developed a calendar for budget development, review, and approval.

- C. Other - None.

V. New Business

- A. Reconsider FY25 Academic Calendar - Superintendent Bonneville presented changes to the calendar and the thought processes involved in its construction. Mr. Lumbra asked that the September 9 preschool start date be added to the calendar. Mr. Mawdsley expressed concern about starting and ending later in the year especially given the addition of the Juneteenth holiday. Parent Jennifer Johnson presented parent views. All expressed concerns about implications for the bus contract should Southampton adopt a calendar different than other schools in the district. The Committee indicated a need for clarity on the ramifications on the bus contract before making a decision.
- B. School Choice - Principal Pluta reported that there are no available School Choice seats in Grades One through Six. Mr. Mawdsley moved to authorize the principal to open up to ten Kindergarten seats. Ms. Schott seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- C. Salary Range for the Incoming Superintendent - Mr. Mawdsley moved to authorize a salary range of \$175,000 to \$195,000 for the incoming superintendent and that the appropriate placeholder be made in the budget. Ms. Larson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- D. Superintendent Search Committee Representative - Mr. Mawdsley made a motion for Mr. Lumbra to be primary and for Ms. Larson to be secondary representative to the Superintendent Search Committee. Ms. Schott seconded the motion. Mr. Lumbra abstained. Ms. Larson, Mr. Mawdsley, and Ms. Schott voted aye. The motion passed.
- E. Other - Principal Pluta reported that the students, pending School Committee approval, will be going on a field trip to Granby, Connecticut. Ms. Larson moved to permit the students to go on an out-of-state field trip. Mr. Mawdsley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Ongoing Business

- A. Construction of New School - Mr. Lumbra reported that a full appraisal has been ordered for the property. The Select Board's opinion is mixed. There is an attempt to place the matter on the May 7 ballot. The development process and identification of applicable town services to be located there is up in the air.
- B. Update on Security Enhancement Work/School Safety Grant - Principal Pluta reported that this initiative is on hold pending a meeting with the Town Administrator.
- C. Update of Replacement of Preschool Van - Principal Pluta reported that the van is on hold pending a meeting with the Town Administrator.
- D. Other - None.

- VII. Adjourn** - Ms. Larson made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Ms. Schott. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:29 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Cassie Eckhof

Principal's Report
Norris School Committee
March 13, 2024

- We had a half day on Friday, March 8th for professional development. Teachers met with vertical teams to discuss curriculum gaps when transitioning to the next grade. We will review these findings at all grade-level meetings this week.
- Grade 3 students will be visiting Storowton Village Museum in the next few weeks. Students will participate in a living museum experience and learn about life in colonial times. They will be visiting different buildings including the meeting house, blacksmith shop, family home, and more. They will participate and learn about different activities that children in colonial times would have done.
- Grades 5 and 6 will travel to Hampshire Regional to see the preview of the musical, Mary Poppins on March 19th.
- Kindergarten students will explore force, motion, and stability at Roots Gymnastics Center on March 25th. Students will later share their experiences and participate in a writing activity about their visit.
- The Grade 6 Quidditch tournament will be held on Tuesday, April 9th. Staff will play against the students that evening.
- MCAS Testing in ELA will begin on Tuesday, March 26 with grade 6. A schedule for all testing went home to parents.

			MARCH 2024			
Grade	September 2021	June 2023	School of Choice	Out of District	Drop Ins	March 2024
Pre K	16	25			3	26
Pre K	16	27				25
Kindergarten	63	62	9			63
Grade 1	61	65	8			61
Grade 2	57	58	3	1		68
Grade 3	67	57	8			58
Grade 4	54	62	7			60
Grade 5	77	53	4		1	60
Grade 6	58	77	8	1		54
Totals:	469	486	47	2	4	475
Total Enrollment	479					

HRSD Superintendent's Report for March 2024:

- **Commissioner Riley** has resigned from DESE and plans to step down on March 15 after six years leading the MA K-12 school system. Riley will stay on as an advisor through the end of the school year and will recommend Deputy Commissioner Russell Johnston to serve as the acting commissioner. Most people know Com. Riley as the MA schools' leader during the COVID-19 pandemic, where he had to make calls to close and reopen schools, launch pool testing, and provide guidance on mask mandates. He is also known for a new MCAS civics assessment, a new comprehensive health and P.E. curriculum framework, diversification of the teacher corps, and a Literacy Launch

program to get higher-quality literacy materials into dozens of struggling districts to increase reading and writing skills.

- **Business Office Updates:**

- Theresa Turner has been hired as our new Accounts Payable/ Receivable Clerk. She has a great deal of experience and has been learning the ropes under Donna Lawrence's guidance. Together they have done a great job addressing overdue invoices.
- A short-term temp was hired to assist Rachel Cenedella in payroll. We are interviewing candidates to become HRSD employees who will run payroll/ benefits once Rachel C. leaves that position in June to join our Special Education team. We are planning to hire two individuals since we will need one person to focus on payroll and the other to focus on Human Resources/ Benefits due to the high number of ongoing issues. A big thank you to Rachel Emerson, who has been spending her days managing MTRS and other HR issues in addition to her regular tasks. Additionally, we will hire an HR consultant to mentor these new employees and develop an employee database for Harpers Payroll, which will allow all employees easy access to their payroll information.
- We are updating job descriptions for payroll, benefits, accounting, and assistant business manager; all will be approved by the ADC.
- We have posted for a business manager and assistant business manager on SchoolSpring
 - The district will be aggressively posting for the business manager in areas other than school spring
 - Publications may include:
 - Indeed
 - MASS (The Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents)
 - Massachusetts Municipal Association
 - MASC
- MaryJane Rickson and I have taken over the responsibility of HR, daily payroll, and securing staffing for FY25 in order to allow our Business Administrator time to focus on FY25 budgets. Mary Jane will play an active role in transitioning us from FY24 to FY25. We will have frequent check-ins with DESE and the ADC Finance Subcommittee
- We have met with Camie Lamica, our treasurer, who has agreed to mentor our new business hires (Business Administrator/ Asst. Business Administrator/ Accountant). We have also met with MassMuniFin to discuss what role they are comfortable fulfilling in the FY25 school year.

- MaryJane Rickson and Nicole Heroux have been working with Academic Discoveries to evaluate our Pre-K programming. We are working directly with the owner Nadine Ekstrom who is a retired Special Education Director, Principal, and Superintendent. The audit will focus on consistency in the district's programs and needs to better support our

PreSchool students. There will be a series of interviews, observations, and focus groups to help create and support the audit.

- Schools are gearing up for Spring MCAS, ensuring that computers are working properly and all students are electronically registered. We expect a continued rise in Math scores due to our collaborative efforts in implementing *Bridges* and *Into Math* curricula.
- As a Tiered Focus Monitoring audit recommendation, we have updated the district **student handbook**, which lists various Special Ed and disciplinary laws, as well as health and technology procedures, and general school policies. A big thank you to Amanda Faro, who wrote the handbook a couple of years ago when she was completing her principal internship with Mr. Bates.