



**Haverhill Public Schools - School Committee  
Remote Regular Meeting Minutes of February 25, 2021**

**Roll Call - Pledge of Allegiance.**

Mayor Fiorentini, Chairperson called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and requested a roll call of the members.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Present	Attorney Rosa	Present
Ms. Sullivan	Present	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Present
Attorney Magliocchetti	Present	Mr. Wood, Vice Chair	Present
Mayor Fiorentini, Chair	Present		

Dr. Margaret Marotta, Superintendent of Schools, and Mr. Michael Pfifferling, Assistant Superintendent were also present.

Mayor Fiorentini read the following Opening Statement: Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, Governor Baker issued an Emergency Order temporarily suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A sec. 20. Public bodies otherwise governed by the OML are temporarily relieved from the requirement that meetings be held in public places, open and physically accessible to the public, so long as measures are taken to ensure public access to the bodies' deliberations "through adequate, alternative means." This meeting will be available via live streaming over HCTV and WHAV. The full meeting recording will be posted on the HCTV website.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**Public Comment.**

- Ms. Katrina Sullivan, 16 Westminster Avenue, Haverhill MA, School Nurse:
  - Her pride with working with her fellow nurses;
  - According to CDC, there is a high incidence of multi-system inflammatory syndrome in MA children;
  - selection of a plan that follows the science and reflects the HPS staff's protocols.
- Mr. Anthony Parolisi, 169 Summer Street, Haverhill MA, HEA President:
  - Thanked the staff and members of JCVRTS;
  - The HEA does not object to a reopening plan, but was the vote undermines the work of the task force;
  - Collaborative work with administration on Joint Labor Management Meeting;
  - Highlighted his perception that the metric was ignored;
  - Encouraged settlement of ESP (market correction and living wage of \$34,000) and Secretaries' contracts;
  - April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline is nonsensical;
  - ESPs should not have to work longer hours to receive a fair wage and the current salaries are immoral;
  - Haverhill should set the example for ESP wages.
- Ms. Bronwyn Crocker, 80 Brandy Brow Road, Haverhill, MA, Parent:
  - Support the cancelation of 2021 MCAS testing and support the MASC Resolution;
  - MCAS cannot measure student learning during a pandemic;
  - ESPs are invaluable educators and deserve a living wage.
- Ms. Bonnie MacAdams, North Reading, MA, School Nurse (coordinates COVID response) & Chair of the MSNA (Massachusetts School Nurses' Association):
  - School nurses have done an excellent job returning students to school safely;
  - Maintenance of proper protocols regarding social distancing and hygiene;
  - A concern with misrepresentation of guidelines and reduction of social distancing from 6 ft. to 3 ft. which will increase cases;

- A potential for disruption for quarantines due to close contact and scheduling;
- A proud member of team and the extensive effort in regards to contract tracing, and pool testing;
- A concern with being able to provide safe and appropriate patient care along with COVID responsibilities.
- Ms. Hollie Littlefield, no address given and parent of school children:
  - She read a letter in support of an esp who will be leaving the district after supporting her children for six years;
  - A crossing guard and former lunch monitor who witnessed the hard work of ESPs;
  - Her sadness in this person leaving the district.

**Student Advisory Council – Ms. Gabriela Vargas.**

Ms. Vargas provided an update on Haverhill High School activities including:

- HHS Drama is presenting Student Council vs. Andy Johnson this Friday with the link on HHS website and Facebook;
- Congratulations to Gymnastics Team on winning the MVC Championship;
- FASFA Workshops are being held at NECC tonight and also on March 4 and March 25 form 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm;
- Course Selection for next year, please select classes outside comfort zone;
- Virtual College Fair will be held on 2.28.21;
- Scholarship Portal is open;
- Term 3 is the hardest one, please do your best;
- Stay safe, healthy, and positive.

**Superintendent Comments/Reports.**

[HHS Student Leaders Report on Equity and Access Progress file:///Volumes/GoogleDrive/My Drive/Diversifying the HPS District Curriculum.pdf](file:///Volumes/GoogleDrive/My Drive/Diversifying the HPS District Curriculum.pdf)

Dr. Marotta acknowledged high school students who would making a presentation on Diversity and Equity.

Ms. Vargas had each of the students introduce themselves to the Committee: Rebecca Hamel, Senior and Student Council Vice President, Hailey Prunier, Junior and Nathaniel Buteau, Junior, both are representatives of the Student Council and are the Co-Heads of the Policy Committee. She noted that the students wished to share their changes in diversity within the school curriculum, as well to propose these ideas as possible changes for possible full district implementation. Ms. Vargas stated the project began last spring and they were proud to announce that they have started to roll out this month!

Ms. Hamel stated that as a diverse community, it was important to continue to establish an inclusive environment for our citizens, and expose young students to this can ultimately have long-term benefits for our community.

The students reviewed the PowerPoint with the Committee:

- Art Department (Rebecca Hamel)
- Science (Gabriela Vargas)
- CTE (Nathaniel Buteau)
- English Department (Hailey Prunier)
- History Department (Hailey Prunier)
- World Language Department (Rebecca Hamel)
- The Mathematics Department (Nathaniel Buteau & Gabriela Vargas)

Ms. Hamel asked thanked the School Committee and requested that the School Committee and Superintendent Marotta consider expanding the program into the elementary and middle schools.

#### School Committee Comments.

- Mayor Fiorentini thanked the students for an outstanding job.
- Attorney Rosa acknowledged the students' hard work.
- Attorney Magliocchetti related that Haverhill had in the past had ethnic-specific neighborhoods and now was a more blended community. He thanked the students for bringing this issue to their attention and noted that it was a great presentation. Attorney Magliocchetti was proud of the students.
- Mrs. Sapienza Donais commented on the excellent ideas in the various curriculum areas and the out of the box ideas.

Dr. Marotta was very impressed with the work and courage of the scholars.

Ms. Vargas, on behalf of the students thanked the Superintendent and the School Committee for their kind words and support.

#### Item moved up in agenda order ~ Attorney Rosa: Pear Deck Educational Software Presentation.

Attorney Rosa stated that during a tour of schools in December, Hunking teacher Mr. Briggs demonstrated Pear Deck software. He was very impressed with the program and wanted to share Pear Deck with the School Committee and Public.

Ms. Tiffany Corcoran, Hunking/Silver Hill Schools Math Coach and Ms. Erin Doherty, High School Math Teacher offered a Pear Deck Presentation [./././Users/bcassano/Downloads/PearDeck Demo for SC.pdf](https://www.dropbox.com/s/1234567890/PearDeck%20Demo%20for%20SC.pdf?dl=1). Ms. Doherty started with a brief description of Pear Deck (Slides) help engage every student in every seat and give formative assessments, no matter what grade or subject that is taught in the classroom. She noted that Pear Deck supports an interactive and community-focuses classroom that helps students build confidence and comprehension. Ms. Corcoran noted the student engagement feature of Pear Deck.

Attorney Rosa asked if there was a feature for off line work for students. Ms. Doherty replied the Student Pace Mode (asynchronous) and Instructor Pace Mode. In response to Attorney Rosa' comment regarding accessing student progress, Ms. Doherty replied it allowed her to access student's progression.

Dr. Marotta thanked Ms. Corcoran and Ms. Doherty for sharing and highlighted that the program had been suggested by teachers and it was widely used within the district.

#### COVID Update.

Superintendent Marotta offered the following data to the School Committee on COVID and Changes in Learning Models ~ [Planning for Return to Full In-Person Learning revised 2.25 SC PP final.pdf](#) and [revised 2.25 SC PP final Latest Guidance Operating Schools During Pandemic.pdf](#). She indicated that Haverhill was still in red which meant high transmission rates. Dr. Marotta highlighted the really good work done by staff and students in "layered mitigation strategies" which included: universal and correct use of masks, physical distancing, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities and contract tracing, isolation and quarantine. Dr. Marotta noted Haverhill was a leader in the state in terms of layers of protection that have been implemented in the district. The Superintendent remarked that Commissioner Riley had expressed key components of a plan for schools to return to full in-person learning in April. She shared additional data which included: DESE Transportation Guidance, CDC Indicators and Thresholds for Community Transmission of COVID-19 {Red = High

Transmission; Orange = Substantial Transmission; Yellow = Moderate Transmission}, along with the Return to School Survey Results (3,575 responses).

Mayor Fiorentini supported parental options. Attorney Magliocchetti concurred with parental options. He noted there had to be flexibility in configuring the schools due to space limitations (social distancing).

Dr. Marotta continued with the survey results that included responses to changing classroom peers, teachers and schools with a 65% = no; 21% = maybe and 14% = yes. The Superintendent stated that in order to put together a thoughtful plan additional information is needed from the State.

#### School Committee Comments and Input.

Attorney Magliocchetti indicated that this was a complex and time-consuming endeavor.

Attorney Rosa noted that the CDC offered guidelines and DESE could mandate the operation of our schools; Dr. Marotta agreed with this statement.

The Superintendent was hesitant of developing a plan that might conflict with guidance from DESE.

Dr. Marotta suggested a working group expanding to teachers and School Committee members.

Attorney Rosa remarked that parents should have the choice to select remote learning and asked if the School Committee could advocate for this option.

Superintendent Marotta related there was a possibility of getting a DESE waiver due to space limitations for social distancing.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais expressed deep, gut-wrenching concern about making any classroom movements. She noted the school nurses' reservations about returning to full in-person learning. Mrs. Sapienza Donais suggested there should be a focus on relationship building for students who have been through such trauma (loss of friendship, time and connections) due to the pandemic.

Ms. Sullivan stated concern regarding the many moving parts to the development of a plan including: when the DESE Board of Education will meet; what will be the decision; and will remote learning be abolished and not count towards learning. She noted that the Commissioner's priority should be on teacher vaccinations.

Mayor Fiorentini supported getting children back to in-person learning. He referenced the severity of the mental health crisis for students due to being out of school during the pandemic. The Mayor suggested the possibility of double sessions in the district. He looked forward to the Superintendent's Plan.

#### **Old Business.**

##### Attorney Magliocchetti – Vaccine Update.

Attorney Magliocchetti reiterated the importance of teacher vaccinations and noted this item would continue to appear on future agendas to highlight this topic.

Mayor Fiorentini related that plans were underway for a mobile vaccination site for teachers (school department employees).

