



**Haverhill Public Schools - School Committee  
Regular Meeting Minutes of February 27, 2020  
Theodore A. Pelosi, Jr. City Council Chambers – 7:00 pm**

Attorney Richard Rosa, Vice Chairperson called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and requested a roll call of the members:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Present	Ms. Sullivan	Present
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Absent (7:15 pm)	Attorney Magliocchetti	Present
Mr. Wood	Present	Attorney Rosa, Vice Chair	Present
Mayor Fiorentini, Chair	Absent (7:03 pm)		

Dr. Margaret Marotta Superintendent of Schools and Mr. Michael Pfifferling, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations was also present. Student Advisory Council Member Ms. Leah Pearse.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the members.

Vice Chair Rosa stated "those attending tonight's meeting should be aware that the meeting is being audio and video recorded by HCTV and WHAV. Any audience members who wish to record any part of the meeting must inform the Chair who will announce the recording. This is to comply with the MA wiretap statute."

Mayor Fiorentini assumed chairing the meeting at 7:03 pm.

**Public Comment.**

Mr. Steve Costa, 35 South Kimball Street, Haverhill MA, spoke in support of Bradford Principal Louise Perry.

Mr. Anthony Parolisi, Haverhill Education Association President, stated his support for the Bradford Elementary Staff letter requesting help (fear and retaliation climate in building) to the School Committee and Superintendent, along with fellow colleagues in other buildings. He thanked Dr. Marotta for her response to the letter and leadership. Mr. Parolisi also commended Sandra McArthur, Krysten Howell, Judy Manzi, and Dale Libkin for their empathy in investigating the allegations in the letter. He looked forward to the results of the investigation.

Mayor Fiorentini did not agree with the public manner in which this matter was handled.

Mr. Parolisi supported his members and acknowledged the right steps the Superintendent had initiated in investigating the matter.

**Item Moved Up in Agenda: Mrs. Sapienza Donais: School Breakfast (reducing the sugar content).**

Mrs. Sapienza Donais related that students in Dr. Sandra Green's Grade 2 classroom at Golden Hill were assigned opinion writing assignment on the sugar content in school breakfast offerings and recycling of materials. She commended the Breakfast After the Bell Program and hoped to start the conversation on offering healthier offerings.

Mrs. Sandra Green, Grade 2 teacher at Golden Hill School spoke about an assignment her students did on the school breakfast program. She introduced the following students made brief comments on breakfast

choices making healthier breakfast options, reducing sugar and recycling: Daniel Ortiz, Molly Sullivan and Sofia Contreras.

Mr. Joe Armenti, along with the new Whitsons General Manager of Food and Nutrition Services Director Ms. Anna Perracchio, RD, LDN spoke about implementing healthier options for breakfast and thanked the students for their suggestions.

The members thanked the students for their input on the school breakfast program.

Mayor Fiorentini asked Dr. Green and the students to continue to follow-up on the school breakfast options for the Committee. Dr. Green thanked Assistant Superintendent Pfifferling, Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello and Mrs. Sapienza Donais for their visit to her classroom and for the committee members for listening to the students' opinions and concerns.

Attorney Magliocchetti thanked Dr. Green and Daniel, Molly and Sofia. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello asked for another round of applause. She asked for a better manner of food disposal in the classrooms without sinks.

Mr. Armenti offered a bucket with a strainer for those classrooms.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais thanked Whitsons representatives Mr. Armenti and Ms. Perracchio for quickly implementing changes.

Vice Chair Rosa emphasized the importance of breakfast in reducing chronic absenteeism, increasing attentiveness and improving behavior. He requested Whitsons' obtain teachers' input.

Mr. Armenti commented Breakfast After the Bell was required by law and that Ms. Perracchio would be visiting schools to speak with staff on the breakfast program. He commented other breakfast offerings would be instituted such as, bagels, whole grain muffins, and yogurt.

Mayor Fiorentini cautioned against sugary cereals and advocated for reviewing the whole menu.

#### Student Advisory Council Report – Ms. Leah Pearse.

Ms. Pearse introduced herself to the new members, since she not been in attendance since the new year. She updated the committee on the following news from HHS:

- Spring sports starting in three weeks;
- Coffeehouse in HHS Auditorium next Wednesday;
- Half-day for Professional Development;
- Model UN Visit to NYC next week;
- Student Council meeting with Dr. Marotta to discuss topics of concern for students.

#### Superintendent Comments/Reports.

Presentation on the Alignment of PBIS (Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support) and PAX (Good Behavior Game) by Golden Hill and Pentucket Lake Staff. [PAXENTATION\\_GH.pdf](#) and [PresentationPAX@PentucketLakeSchool.pdf](#) It was noted that behaviors the class would benefit from, like offering compliments or following directions, are called PAX and things that should happen less, like interrupting or name-calling, are called "spleems".

Principal Bruce Michitson along with Mrs. Kelli Smullin, Art Teacher and Ms. Tracey Alexander, Grade 4 Teacher outlined the implementation of the program in their school and its positive effects on student

behavior and school climate within Golden Hill. Mr. Michitson showed the video of the PAX song and explained a “toodle” is the opposite of a “tattle” (saying something positive).

Dr. Marotta stated that it was costly program to implement in a school.

Vice Chair Rosa was impressed when the harmonica sounded in the Council Chambers, the Golden Hill students reacted according to the PAX sign.

Principal Maureen Gray and Assistant Principal James Brennan spoke about the second year of implementation at Pentucket Lake School. She commented on several February activities such as, Kindness Assembly, Kindness Dance and School Spirit and the collaborative nature of PAX. Mrs. Gray played a video from Mrs. Kathleen Flanagan, Pentucket Lake Grade 1 teacher, who indicated the supplemental nature of the program. Assistant Principal James Brennan reported on the “spleem” counts when students returned in the fall: 38% (grade 1), 28% (grade 2) and 25% (grade 4) which showed that it made a difference. He reported one classroom had a reduction in “spleem” counts from beginning of the school year 168 vs 15 (-91%) which resulted in more time on learning harmonicas. Mr. Brennan had even distributed harmonicas to staff. He noted that the “spleem” observation tracks the behavior of the children before and after a teacher begins implementing the PAX Good Behavior Game in the classroom. The data is used to show teachers and other stakeholders the impact of the intervention.

#### Tilton Upper School Grade Configuration for 2020-2021.

Dr. Marotta offered that next school year, Tilton Lower would remain a K-3 school and Tilton Upper would be a grade 4-5 (5- grade 4 and 4 – grade 5 classrooms) and grade 6-7-8 going to Consentino School. She acknowledged Mrs. Antkowiak and Mrs. Fitzgerald.

Principal Bonnie Antkowiak reported that a presently at Tilton Upper there were 5 (grade 4), 2 (grade 5) and 2 (grade 6). She commented the school would have the same classroom number but there would be a change in configuration of the grades.

Superintendent Marotta related that grade 6 students wanted a more traditional middle school experience and Consentino School had a few classrooms to configure for these students.

Attorney Magliocchetti asked about the Consentino School and the building project.

Dr. Marotta commented the feasibility phase would occur this spring and summer. She related that the soonest Haverhill would receive funding from MSBA would be July 2021.

Attorney Magliocchetti asked if there were additional classroom space at Tilton Upper.

Mrs. Antkowiak responded all classrooms were used, however, the pull-out rooms could be re-purposed to classroom space and the annex could be refurbished.

Assistant Superintendent Pfifferling stated that the Consentino Project would be on the 4.5.20 MSBA meeting.

In response to Mrs. Sapienza Donais’ question relative to impact on Consentino and Silver Hill fifth grade, the Superintendent indicated that Silver Hill would still have grade 5.

Bradford Elementary School. Dr. Marotta noted an internal study of the cultural and climate issues at the school were ongoing and related a consultant was on-site as a neutral party to assist teachers and administrative team. She offered reassurance that students were learning and the adults were receiving support.

Retirement of Chief Academic Officer Beth Kitsos and Posting of Position.

Superintendent Marotta offered that “hunting season” was underway for administrative positions and it was time to seek a replacement for the retiring Chief Academic Officer Beth Kitsos. She also stated that a key senior leadership position was critical to provide leadership and supervision for teaching and learning in the district. She asked the Committee’s preference for either a Chief Academic Officer (or similar title) or an Assistant Superintendent.

Vice Chair Rosa was glad the Superintendent was looking at this position.

Mayor Fiorentini was concerned with the title and the past history of individuals leaving the district shortly after being designated an Assistant Superintendent.

Mr. Wood recommended keeping the title Chief Academic Officer and stated his regret for supporting the positions of Assistant Superintendent many years ago. He commented that the individuals soon after left the district for other positions.

Attorney Magliocchetti was hesitant to post the position as an Assistant Superintendent. He noted the change in title had benefitted the district with the Business Manager position.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello inquired about the process for posting the position. Dr. Marotta responded that the position would be openly posted within and outside the district.

Ms. Sullivan noted that Chief Academic Officer was not the usual descriptor, was an uncommon and confusing title and Assistant Superintendent could attract highly qualified candidates. In reference to Mr. Wood’s earlier comments, she stated that smart, ambitious people may leave districts for many reasons.

Dr. Marotta related a more descriptive title would be established, but that the individual would need to hold an Assistant Superintendent licensure.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to authorize the posting of the position as anything other than Assistant Superintendent. Mrs. Sapienza Donais seconded the motion.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais asked since there had been two CAO in the past.

Superintendent Marotta related that community input over the next few weeks, could impact the district’s administrative structure and she did not want to wait until April 1, 2020.

A roll call vote was held with the following results:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mr. Wood	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Mayor Fiorentini	Yes		
7 members voted in the affirmative			Motion passes
0 members voted in the negative			
0 members abstained			

School Committee Communications.

Mayor Fiorentini: Reappointment of Scott Wood to the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical School District School Committee.

Mayor Fiorentini asked for the will of the Committee and if Mr. Wood was interested in reappointment.

Mr. Wood indicated his wish to be reappointed.

A motion was made by Mrs. Sapienza Donais to reappoint Mr. Scott Wood to the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical School District School Committee for a three-year term ending March 31, 2023. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion. A roll call vote was held with the following results:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mr. Wood	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Mayor Fiorentini	Yes		
7 members voted in the affirmative		Motion passes	
0 members voted in the negative			
0 members abstained			

Mayor Fiorentini assigned Mr. Wood the task of keeping abreast of the developments in Chapter 74 additional funding. He noted that Governor Baker recommended vocational schools have 3 sessions a day (regular day-after school-evening) to provide vocational offerings for interested students.

Mr. Wood replied the evening program had heavily attended sessions.

Mr. Wood: Public Relations Position.

He noticed a firm was used recently.

Dr. Marotta answered that the family engagement specialist posting did not yield the right person for the district. She related that Alpha Consulting, a local agency had reached out to the district. The Superintendent commented that the district indicated that media support might be needed. Dr. Marotta offered that a small contract had been entered into with Alpha Consulting for an amount up to \$5,000 on as a needed basis for the remainder of school year.

Mr. Wood: Clarification of School Committee Visits Policy.

Mr. Wood commented that a policy had been developed with a policy and is written there is no 48-hour notice. He related it could be done as a courtesy, however, it is a policy to notify of the superintendent. He has never had an issue or been denied entry.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais: Budget Input.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais respectfully requested the following information:

- Budget Schedule/Calendar;
- Spreadsheet of all Administrators with title, job description and salary for the following dates: 03.01.18; 03.01.19 and 03.01.20;
- Spreadsheet on any positions (not teachers or educational support personnel) added as of 03.01.19 and 03.01.20.

Mayor Fiorentini stated these type of requests, should come from the Committee as a whole.

Attorney Magliocchetti responded that the Finance Subcommittee would be meeting on a regular basis during budget season, particularly every few weeks. He encouraged other members to attend these subcommittee meetings. Attorney Magliocchetti commented it would be helpful to get as much input from members. He asked the executive assistant to send out the Finance Subcommittee meeting schedule tomorrow.

Mr. Wood did not have a problem requesting information. Ms. Sullivan has held a previous meeting.

Ms. Sullivan noted there was a recent phone conversation with the State regarding the Consentino School Project. She asked Dr. Marotta to update the Committee.

Dr. Marotta offered the following information concerning the informal phone conversation with MSBA held during school recess relative to Consentino School. She noted that MSBA asked the district to look at different options and grade configurations: 760 student school; 940 student school; 1100 student school and a 1300 student school with potential grade configurations of grades 5-6-7-8 and 6-7-8. The Superintendent commented that all options would be carefully reviewed during the feasibility stage. Dr. Marotta stated that no option would be ruled out but initially, the 760-student school (would not meet our needs) and a 1300 student school (largest middle school in Commonwealth) are not favored.

Mr. Wood asked about the Tilton Upper grade configuration change impact on Consentino. Dr. Marotta responded it was a minimal impact two additional classrooms of a grade already in the school.

Vice Chair Rosa asked if the new school enrollment would mean the end of the St. James lease. Mayor Fiorentini answered that only the 1300-student school would end the lease and alleviate overcrowding.

Attorney Magliocchetti offered the following scenario of three schools containing middle school grade configuration: Consentino, Hunking and JG Whittier, with possibility of changing Nettle School's grade structure for consideration.

#### Subcommittee Reports.

Attorney Rosa announced the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual HHS Athletics Comedy Night is March 13, 2020 tickets can be purchased at high school, calling Athletic Department or through a scholar athlete.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello publicized the JG Whittier PTO Music Bingo night at the Elk's on Saturday, February 29, 2020. She commended all PTO's in the district along with the teachers who supported their efforts.

#### Old Business.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais: Summer Building Renovations (originally tabled 01.23.20) [SC Summer Review Slides 022720.pdf](#).

Mrs. Sapienza Donais had questions on Greenleaf Academy bathroom completion, renovation of upstairs rooms and exhaust fan. She commented getting calls if there is a custodian at Bartlett location.

Ms. Heather Forgione, Supervisor of Facilities related that Greenleaf Academy's renovations were not totally completed before school, but had since been finished.

In reference to the exhaust fan for kitchen area (culinary program), Dr. Marotta offered that last summer extensive discussions had taken place concerning this issue. She reported that it was not a commercial kitchen, but a home style kitchen space which would teach students' daily life skills.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais responded that the staff would like to see the return of the school's original culinary program.

Both Dr. Marotta and Ms. Forgione replied that was not possible based on recommendations from the Building Inspection and Fire Departments.

Superintendent Marotta noted there were other culinary options that were available to students at Learning Café and Haverhill High School. She commented that Mr. DePolo had many discussions.

Mayor Fiorentini asked if a Culinary Institute collaboration was a possibility and Dr. Marotta stated it was an option.

Mr. Wood asked about the situation with the Bartlett custodian. Ms. Forgione answered that it was a medical leave situation and stated the custodial needs were attended to on a consistent daily basis.

Ms. Sullivan asked about the kind of paint used at Hunking School that prevented proper cleaning. Ms. Forgione commented that it had been discussed. Mrs. Sapienza Donais asked for a solution since it was a flagship school. Dr. Marotta commented that a 1000-student school had been painted entirely in a flat white paint and there were high traffic areas.

Mr. Pfifferling commented on chipping paint at Walnut Square School and therefore, the Hunking School was not a priority.

Ms. Forgione presented a PowerPoint presentation.

Mr. Wood asked about Bartlett custodian. Ms. Forgione responded that it was a medical leave and substitute or other custodial staff were filling in while staff member is out on leave.

Vice Chair Rosa asked about roofs. Ms. Forgione answered the following schools, Nettle, Golden Hill, Silver Hill, Pentucket Lake, Bradford and Haverhill High School were in need of attention. She noted that an evaluation of the roofs and minor maintenance were conducted by the vendor.

Attorney Magliocchetti asked for a breakdown of city work orders. Ms. Forgione offered the city work orders were in the 5% range.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello commented that roofs were a major issue. She asked about scoreboard at Whittier School. Mr. Pfifferling replied the cost was approximately \$4,000 and that the matter was redirected to the Whittier School for consideration. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello asked for clarification of the funding source for the Silver Hill School scoreboard.

In relation to a Preventative Maintenance Plan, Ms. Forgione answered the plan was not fully implemented based on the number of personnel and finances and it needed to be done.

Mayor Fiorentini reported that the Matrix Study on Facilities would address many of these issues and concerns.

Mr. Wood noted that a custodial grievance had been lost because the work had not been offered to our current custodial staff.

Both Superintendent Marotta and Assistant Superintendent Pfifferling answered that in the ServPro case, it was offered, but the custodial staff were at capacity with work in their buildings and did not take advantage of the overtime. Ms. Forgione answered that several opportunities had been offered in the weeks prior to this event and the only time it was not offered, it was grieved.

Vice Chair Rosa asked if there were times when contractor usage was more cost effective. Mayor Fiorentini agreed with that assumption because hiring employees required paying benefits and pension.

Attorney Rosa related that the jobs were specialized. Ms. Forgione concurred with that opinion.

Mayor Fiorentini responded there would be a Maintenance Department. He added that the IT Department was almost completely outsourced but required one employee to supervise the department. The Mayor asked about the staffing in the maintenance department and Ms. Forgione replied there were six employees in the department.

Mayor Fiorentini commended Ms. Forgione's presentation and displaying the myth of not doing preventative and ongoing maintenance and asked for the before and after slides. He provided a brief update on the Matrix Facility Study.

In response to the Mayor's inquiry regarding relationship with the custodians, Ms. Forgione offered training to the custodial staffing. She offered that the senior custodian and principal supervise the overall cleaning of the building. Mayor Fiorentini commented that there needed to be improvement relative to city departments contacting the maintenance department and/or submitting work orders. He suggested working with Ms. Forgione to improve the situation.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais: Notification of Surplus (originally tabled 01.23.20).

Mrs. Sapienza Donais asked for clarification on the policy and sought Mr. Wood's input on this item.

Mr. Pfifferling interjected that in the absence of a school or city policy, it would default to the state policy which states, items over \$10,000 need to be declared surplus. He noted that was the policy that had been followed.

Mr. Wood commented that items declared surplus in the past were of lesser value and this was a change in the manner in which this had been handled in his 16-year tenure on the School Committee. He asked this issue be sent to the Policy Subcommittee.

Vice Chair Rosa asked about how items were declared surplus. Ms. Forgione heard from principals or custodians with items.

Attorney Rosa asked about disposal. Mr. Pfifferling answered dumpsters located at our school sites could not have furniture.

In relation to the Barn dumpster, Ms. Forgione commented there were frequent "neighborhood" deposits.

Regarding the Mayor's question on the barn lease, Ms. Forgione replied two years were remaining.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello asked about how surplus materials were distributed. Ms. Forgione commented that emails were sent out by facilities clerk announcing items and they were repurposed to other schools.

Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello asked about a Whittier space and the removal of furniture. Ms. Forgione noted that if someone felt uncomfortable it would be removed as a safety precaution.

Updated Superintendent's Goals (tabled 02.13.20) [Superintendent Goals Final 02.27.20.pdf](#).

Mayor Fiorentini commended the subcommittee (Ms. Sullivan and Mrs. Sapienza Donais) for its work.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve the Updated Superintendent Goals. Attorney Rosa seconded the motion.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais questioned the removal of "developing a system of phone calls" from the goals. Mayor Fiorentini believed that item had been deleted. He continued by noting that the delay in setting and approving goals was the Committee's fault and that some of these goals due to the lateness of approval could not be completed by June 30.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais asked to amend the motion to add "develop a system so that every phone call and every email is responded to by the Superintendent or a school department official within three business days."

Mr. Wood commented that these were only suggestions to the Superintendent.



The motion dies for lack of a second.

A roll call vote was held with the following results:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mr. Wood	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Mayor Fiorentini	Yes		
7 members voted in the affirmative		Motion passes	
0 members voted in the negative			
0 members abstained			

Mayor Fiorentini thanked Attorney Magliocchetti and Dr. Marotta for their assistance.

#### New Business.

The Superintendent recommended approval of the following Warrants [Approval of Warrants HSC PACKET 022720 .pdf](#) as indicated in the agenda material.

- 1) Warrant Number EV20200228 totaling \$423,462.86.
- 2) Warrant Number EV20200228A totaling \$2,911.33.
- 3) Warrant Number EV20200228B totaling \$794,125.37.
- 4) Warrant Number JE20200228 totaling \$2,538.72.

Attorney Magliocchetti requested Warrant #2 be voted separately.

Vice Chair Rosa inquired about School Health Company and asked if there was a contract or was it an approved vendor. Mr. Pfifferling responded it was the main supplier for school nursing materials.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve Warrants #1, #3 and #4 as indicated in the agenda material.

Attorney Magliocchetti seconded the motion. A roll call vote was held with the following results:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mr. Wood	No	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Mayor Fiorentini	Yes		
6 members voted in the affirmative		Motion passes	
1 member voted in the negative			
0 members abstained			

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve Warrant #2 as indicated in the agenda material. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. A roll call vote was held with the following results:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Abstained
Mr. Wood	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Mayor Fiorentini	Yes		
6 members voted in the affirmative		Motion passes	
0 members voted in the negative			
1 member abstained			

The Superintendent recommended approval of Items by Consensus as indicated in the agenda material:

- Use of Facilities [UOF 02.27.20 6 A.pdf](#).
- Field Trip Request [School Committee Meeting Agenda Item FT 02.27.20.pdf](#).

- Minutes of Regular Meeting of February 13, 2020 [School Committee Regular Meeting Minutes 02.13.20 Final & Approved.pdf](#).

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve the Items by Consensus as indicated. Attorney Magliocchetti seconded the motion.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais asked if there were any conflicts with schools' activities (graduations, promotion ceremonies). Mr. Pfifferling asked Ms. Forgione to review the requests with her principal clerk and make needed adjustments.

A roll call vote was held with the following results:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mr. Wood	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Mayor Fiorentini	Yes		
7 members voted in the affirmative		Motion passes	
0 members voted in the negative			
0 members abstained			

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to adjourn the meeting (10:03 pm). Vice Chair Rosa seconded the motion. A roll call vote was held with the following results:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mr. Wood	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Mayor Fiorentini	Yes		
7 members voted in the affirmative		Motion passes	
0 members voted in the negative			
0 members abstained			