



**Haverhill Public Schools - School Committee**  
**Hybrid Regular Meeting Minutes of January 26, 2023**

**Roll Call - Pledge of Allegiance.**

Mayor Fiorentini, Chairperson called the meeting to order (7:00 pm) and requested a roll call vote:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Present in person	Attorney Rosa	Present in person
Ms. Sullivan	Absent	Attorney Magliocchetti	Present in person
Mr. Wood	Present in person	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Present remotely 7:05 pm
Mayor Fiorentini	Present in person		

Dr. Margaret Marotta, Superintendent of Schools and Mr. Michael Pfifferling, Assistant Superintendent of Schools were also in attendance at the meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited by the audience.

Mayor Fiorentini read the following statement: The Haverhill School Committee encourages the district community to attend its meeting to learn about public school operations and programs. In addition, the committee wants to hear the wishes and ideas of the public. The following points are a summary of the committee's public comment policy: speakers must provide their full name and address and will be allowed three minutes to present their material, the presiding chairperson may permit an extension of the time limit. Individuals may address topics on the agenda item, items specified for public comment, or items within the scope of the responsibility of the school committee. Improper, defamatory or abusive remarks are not allowed and are always out of order. If a speaker persists in improper conduct or abusive comments, the chairperson may terminate an individual's permission to address the committee. The committee will not hear personal complaints of school personnel nor against any members of the school committee. All citizens shall speak to the full committee through the chair and should not address individual members or administrators.

**Public Comment.**

Mr. Dale Leone (former student) Race Street, Haverhill, MA spoke in favor of teachers' ability to strike regarding contract issues.

Mr. Stephen Costa, parent commented on the recent high school football hazing incident and inquired about implications for the athletic director. He proposed the resignation/retirement of the athletic director along with the establishment of a taskforce.

Mayor Fiorentini noted that some of the comments regarding the athletic director should not have been allowed during public comment. He stated that Mr. O'Brien was a fine man.

**Student Advisory Council Report – Sean Wynn.**

Sean provided an update from the high school:

- Biology AP retakes will occur on February 1-2, 2023;
- Juniors and Seniors will be meeting with guidance counselors to discuss post-graduation plans;
- Freshmen will be meeting with their counselors to consider their four-year plans;
- PSAT scores are available on the College Board website for participating students;
- First semester has been extended by one (1) day due to snow day and the second semester will now begin on Tuesday;

- Boys' Swim Team Meet will begin tomorrow at 3:30 pm at the HHS pool.

### **Superintendent Comments/Reports.**

School Committee 2023 Scholarship Application (informational). Ms. Petra Farias, Supervisor of School Counseling K-12 requested a change in the application process by reducing the letters of reference from three (3) to one (1) because of the challenge in obtaining all the letters (adults who are requested to write the reference letters).

A motion was made by Attorney Rosa to approve the School Committee 2023 Scholarship Application [School Committee Application 2023 \(1\).pdf](#). Attorney Magliocchetti seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes	Mr. Wood	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello	Yes	Mayor Fiorentini	Yes

6 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

A motion was made by Attorney Rosa to approve the reduction of letters of reference from three (3) letters to one (1) letter. Attorney Magliocchetti seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes	Mr. Wood	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello	Yes	Mayor Fiorentini	No

5 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

1 member voted in the negative

0 members abstained

High School Program of Studies. Mr. Roland Boucher, high school administrator introduced Associate Principal Victoria Liu to provide an overview of the program of studies [Updates to Program of Studies.pdf](#).

NEASC Two-Year Progress Report. Mr. Boucher noted that the high school had missed a deadline for submitting an update and had been granted an extension to February 1, 2023. He introduced Ms. Natalie Willwerth, co-chair of the NEASC Steering Committee presented a summary of the progress report [HHS 2-year NEASC Progress Report \(1\).pdf](#)

Introduction of Brian Edmunds, Principal of the Gateway School. Mr. Edmunds offered a brief presentation on the school's efforts and strategies [SC Presentation - Gateway Academy 1.26.23.pdf](#). He announced the recent hiring of Ms. Phuong Vu (middle school math/science teacher) and Mr. Simon Kigwana (high school math/science teacher).

Mayor Fiorentini supported the concept of a gateway academy and illustrated the negative impact of usage of cell phones along with increasing vocational options for students.

Mr. Edmunds commented that the strategies and processes were showing success at the Gateway. He noted the partnerships with HP3 and YMCA had allowed for several students to see themselves in several careers.

In response to Mrs. Sapienza Donais' inquiry on expansion options, Mr. Edmunds responded that there were opportunities for growth.

### **School Committee Reports/Communications.**

Attorney Rosa: Introduction of YMCA Regional Executive Director (Haverhill/Plaistow) Tracy Fuller to discuss outcomes from the YMCA's 2022 Literacy Academy in partnership with the Haverhill Public Schools along with an Update on HPS and YMCA PASS Partnership Program.

Ms. Fuller stated that one of the Y's missions was to educate children by providing academic support along with a summer camp experience.

Attorney Magliocchetti noted the successful integration between HPS and the YMCA.

Ms. Fuller commented that each year, new students participated and previous attendees enrolled in other programs within the HPS or continued to be involved in the YMCA.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais commended Ms. Fuller for her efforts.

Mayor Fiorentini was very pleased with the data showing the programs' achievements. He requested additional data on lowering the achievement gap.

Superintendent Marotta would consult data specialists in the district to assemble some data on these programs.

Ms. Fuller reported on the PASS (Positive Alternatives to School Suspension) Program [Copy of Haverhill School Committee PASS info.pdf](#) which launched in October 2022 in partnership with Lahey Health, which featured accountability for actions with the potential for changing behaviors (group therapy, individual therapy, lunch etc.). learning better skills, connecting with others along with better coping skills good resource for students and parents.

The mayor asked for what metric would be used to access the success of the Initiative.

In response to Attorney Rosa's question on student referrals, Dr. Marotta replied the students were involved in non-violent offenses such as, vaping and would be recorded as "in school".

Attorney Magliocchetti was encouraged by the program and was hoping for additional data to support its implied achievements.

Attorney Magliocchetti: Discussion of Chat GPT. He related that this item was placed on the agenda to bring awareness of AI generated papers from students and its implications.

Mr. Doug Russell, Director of Technology stated that it was a relatively new program. He reported that it was a blocked program for students on our students.

Attorney Magliocchetti asked for teachers' input on this matter along with a future update.

The mayor expressed concern over plagiarism.

Superintendent Marotta related that there was software to identify plagiarism and AI generated written material.

### **Mrs. Sapienza Donais: Haverhill High School Absenteeism/Tardiness Report (January 2023).**

Mrs. Sapienza Donais had requested this report from the superintendent. She commended the high school

administration for proactively sending a letter to parents.

Superintendent Marotta reported that on a two-hour delay last Friday, 600 students did not attend classes. She emphasized the team work “takes a village” to address this issue and noted that it would be on the agenda next week at a joint meeting with the HEA.

Mrs. Sapienza Donais asked the superintendent to clarify the misconception of suspensions for absenteeism or tardiness.

Dr. Marotta related that there were consequences for students who refused any form of interventions.

### **Subcommittee Reports.**

Maintenance Subcommittee Update: Attorney Magliocchetti & Mrs. Sapienza Donais.

Attorney Magliocchetti reported on a recent visit to JG Whittier and showed pictures of worn stair treads, and exposed wires. He requested that the superintendent to address these issues with the director of maintenance.

Dr. Marotta responded that there was a tremendous amount of effort by the director on buildings and that he was currently involved approximately 15 hours on the Consentino School project. The superintendent suggested a review of an assistant director and concluded that the buildings were in good shape. She was just made aware of the issues and would resolve tomorrow.

Mr. Wood recommended that Mr. Dorrance focus on the day-to-day maintenance operations (as suggested by Ms. Sullivan) and that a consultant address the Consentino School building project.

School Committee Subcommittee Assignments for 2023: Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello. On behalf of Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello, Mr. Wood read the listing of 2023 subcommittee assignments [HSC Subcommittee Assignments 2023 MRC 01.26.23.pdf](#).

Attorney Rosa announced that the Haverhill Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) would be hosting a transition meeting (ages 14-22) featuring Andrea Morris, director of family supports, at the Arc of Greater Haverhill–Newburyport. He stated that the virtual meeting would start at 6 pm on Monday, January 30, 2023 and will address transition planning and services and will focus on transition special education services needed to prepare young adults for employment, independent living, and further education.

### **New Business.**

Superintendent’s Recommendation to approve Warrant Number EV20230127 & EV20230127B totaling \$1,666,620.19 [Warrants EV20230127 and EV20230127B copy.pdf](#) as indicated in the agenda material.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve Warrant Number EV20230127 & EV20230127B totaling \$1,666,620.19. Attorney Rosa seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes	Mr. Wood	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes	Mayor Fiorentini	Yes

6 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Superintendent's Recommendation to approve Warrant Number EV20230127A totaling \$7,793.80 [Warrants EV20230127A with cover.pdf](#) as indicated in the agenda material.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve Warrant Number EV20230127A totaling \$7,793.80. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Attorney Magliocchetti	Abstain	Mr. Wood	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello	Yes	Mayor Fiorentini	Yes

5 members voted in the affirmative                      Motion passes  
0 members voted in the negative  
1 member abstained

#### **Items by Consensus.**

Superintendent's Recommendation for Approval of the Hybrid Regular Meeting Minutes of January 12, 2023, [Final Edit Hybrid Regular Meeting Minutes 01.12.23.pdf](#) and the Use of Facilities [Final UOF 01.26.23 .pdf](#) as indicated in the agenda material.

Mr. Wood requested that the items by consensus (#1 & #2) be separate votes.

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve the hybrid regular meeting minutes of January 12, 2023. Attorney Rosa seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes	Mr. Wood	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello	Yes	Mayor Fiorentini	Yes

6 members voted in the affirmative                      Motion passes  
0 members voted in the negative  
0 members abstained

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve the use of facilities items #1, 2 and 4 as presented in the agenda material. Mrs. Sapienza Donais seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes	Mr. Wood	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello	Yes	Mayor Fiorentini	Yes

6 members voted in the affirmative                      Motion passes  
0 members voted in the negative  
0 members abstained

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to approve the use of facilities #3 with the following change denial of the waiving of utility fees. Mrs. Sapienza Donais seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes	Mr. Wood	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello	Yes	Mayor Fiorentini	Yes

6 members voted in the affirmative                      Motion passes  
0 members voted in the negative  
0 members abstained

A motion was made by Mr. Wood to adjourn the meeting (9:09 pm). Mrs. Sapienza Donais seconded the motion. The vice chair requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Mrs. Sapienza Donais	Yes	Attorney Rosa	Yes
Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes	Mr. Wood	Yes
Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes	Mayor Fiorentini	Yes

6 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained