



**Haverhill Public Schools - School Committee**  
**Hybrid Regular Meeting Minutes of March 28, 2024**

Governor Healey has extended pandemic-related authorizations thereby allowing remote and hybrid meeting options for public bodies through March 31, 2025.

Mayor Barrett read the following statement published for the record: those attending tonight's meeting should be aware that the meeting is being audio and video recorded by HCTV, ET and WHAV. Any audience members who wish to record any part of the meeting must inform the Chairperson who will announce the recording. This is to comply with the MA wiretap statute.

**Roll Call.**

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

Ms. Collins	Present in person	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello	Present remotely
Ms. Diaz	Present in person	Dr. Story	Present in person
Ms. Ferguson	Present in person	Ms. Sullivan	Present in person
Dr. Grannemann	Present in person	Attorney Magliocchetti	Present in person
Mrs. Lalumiere	Present in person	Mayor Barrett	Present in person
Attorney Rosa	Present in person		

Superintendent Margaret Marotta, Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Michael Pfifferling were also in attendance.

**Public Comment.**

Nicholas Ouellette, a 2022 WRVTHS Graduate and his father Richard Ouellette spoke in support of Richard Early, Jr., as the Haverhill representative to the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School – School Committee. He noted Mr. Early's advocacy for his admission to the school and the resulting success both in high school and now in his career as a machinist. Nicholas stated that his sister was a 2014 Whittier graduate who also had a good job.

Melissa and Matthew Gagne, spoke in support of Dick Early, Jr. and his compassion in assisting their children's admission to the school.

Mrs. Karen Currier, retired police officer and business owner provided testimony on behalf of Mr. Early. She noted that her three sons were graduates of Whittier Regional and all had successful careers as a result of their education.

Dr. Dorothy Flaherty, 34 Iris Way, Haverhill, MA, former school committee member thanked Mr. Early for his service and stressed the importance of honoring his tenure of the school committee. She noted his experience in construction as a good resource.

Mr. Joseph Sullivan, 111 Homestead Street, Haverhill, MA, a Whittier Regional parent, spoke in support for Mr. Early's reappointment to the Whittier Regional School Committee. He commended Mr. Early for serving as a role model for students.

Mr. Barry Davis, Market Street, Lowell, MA, thanked Attorney Magliocchetti and Dr. Grannemann for advocacy on Chapter 70 funding. He indicated that there was abuse of the student opportunity act monies. Mr. Davis stated that the Haverhill Education Association was willing to work with the school committee on the student opportunity act.

**Student Advisory Council Report.** Melanie Palacios. Ms. Palacios announced that on April 3, 2024 from 6:00 pm -8:00 pm along with a Trivia Night on April 8, 2024, from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm. Melanie indicated that there were issues with intercoms and this posed a safety issue.

**Superintendent Comments/Reports.**

FY25 Budget Update [SY 24-25 budget workshopII.pdf](#). Superintendent Marotta presented a concise report on the FY25 budget. She announced that the information would be posted on the district's webpage tomorrow. Dr. Marotta reported that a level service budget would be \$136M. She indicated there would be a \$10.7M deficit and that the district had been preparing for this eventuality over the past few years. The superintendent proposed increasing offsets, grant carry-overs, estimated benefits reduction costs (per Mayor Barrett) totaling \$4,881,051. She reviewed the total shortfall before cuts totaling \$6,242,133 which included a placeholder for Wit & Wisdom. Superintendent Marotta reviewed the "green" potential cuts – vacant positions and other cuts totaling \$3,595,563. She continued with the potential "yellow" budget cuts totaling \$1,810,274. Dr. Marotta provided possible "red" cuts which would have a direct impact in the schools and would result in \$836,296 "savings". The superintendent related that the legislature was being lobbied for a change in the Chapter 70 funding formula.

Attorney Magliocchetti reported that services would be impacted for the children of Haverhill. He noted that Mayor Barrett had advocated for greater transparency in government. The vice chair stated it was a preliminary budget and there would be further workshops in May once definitive funding had been announced by the state. He commented that Representative Vargas was sponsoring grant funding for programs such as, Wit and Wisdom.

Request from CREST Collaborative to increase its Capital Fund limit from \$650,000 to \$2,000,000  
[CRESTCapitlaPlanv3.13.24.pdf](#).

Superintendent Marotta read a letter dated March 18, 2024, from Robert M. Jokela, CREST Executive Director formally requesting this request.

Attorney Rosa asked about the impact to districts, since there was no financial impact at this time.

Superintendent Marotta clarified future decisions would be made by their board of directors.

In response to Attorney Rosa's question on whether Dr. Marotta supported the request, she replied that the repairs were needed and there was a five-year plan to accomplish their facilities' needs and not return the money to the districts.

Assistant Superintendent Pfifferling explained that the increase would not impact Haverhill finances.

**School Committee Reports/Communications.**

School Committee: Interview of Candidates for the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School – School Committee: Paul Bergman, Mary Ellen Daly O'Brien, Richard Early, Jr., Debbie Gangi, Jeff LeBlanc, and Warren Seitz.

Attorney Magliocchetti announced a conflict with two (2) candidates and excused himself from the discussion and left the council chambers.

Mayor Barrett was pleased with the response to the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School – School Committee opening. She related that both Ms. Gangi and Mrs. Daly O'Brien had withdrawn from consideration of the position. She related that Mrs. Daly O'Brien supported Mr. Early's continued work on the school committee and would apply if there was another vacant position. The mayor related

that candidates would have 3-5 minutes, this would then be followed by a vote for candidates and the two (2) top vote getters from each school committee member, would then proceed to the next school committee meeting.

Mr. Paul Bergman addressed the school committee regarding this candidacy for the position. He highlighted his civil engineering career and experience on the high school building committee. Mr. Bergman was dismayed at the vote on the new WRVTHS and was hopeful about moving forward with the project.

Mr. Richard Early, Jr. opened by stating he had a strong work ethic. He thanked his supporters and wanted to finish outstanding work at the school. He noted other options were being explored for a resolution to the building project. Mr. Early asked the committee to vote with their heart.

Mr. Jeff LeBlanc, thanked Mr. Early for his service. He wanted to contribute to the betterment of Whittier Regional School and could bring a new perspective to the school committee especially in improving communication. Mr. LeBlanc provided an outline of his experience in higher education and advocacy of education at all grade levels. He noted there was a shortage of skilled labor and was the proud son of an auto mechanic who received his education at Whittier Tech.

The mayor requested a roll call vote, naming the top two candidates from each member, with the following results:

Ms. Collins	Early, LeBlanc	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Early, Present
Ms. Diaz	Early, LeBlanc	Dr. Story	Bergman, LeBlanc
Ms. Ferguson	Early, LeBlanc	Ms. Sullivan	Bergman, LeBlanc
Dr. Grannemann	Early, LeBlanc	Mayor Barrett	Early, Bergman
Mrs. Lalumiere	Bergman, Early		
Attorney Rosa	Bergman, LeBlanc		

7 votes: Mr. Early

7 votes - Mr. LeBlanc

5 votes – Mr. Bergman

1 vote - Present

Mr. Early and Mr. LeBlanc invited back to the next meeting for an interview

Attorney Magliocchetti returned to the meeting at 8:14 pm.

#### **Attorney Magliocchetti: City-funded Pickleball Court.**

The vice chair related that the pickleball court should be completed by next summer and would students would be benefitting from the generosity of Mr. Ernie DiBurro and the city.

#### **Attorney Magliocchetti and Dr. Grannemann: Chapter 70 Funding Fix Update [Impact of Chapter 70 Inflation Cap on Haverhill.pdf](#).**

Attorney Magliocchetti noted that Chapter 70 funding issues needed to be addressed by the state.

Dr. Story thanked Dr. Grannemann for his leadership on this topic and acknowledged the contributions of Attorney Magliocchetti. She commented that legislative requirements should not be funded by the city.

Ms. Collins thanked both Dr. Grannemann and Attorney Magliocchetti for going to the state house. She supported the input of students and would volunteer to facilitate these efforts.

Attorney Rosa thanked both Dr. Grannemann and Attorney Magliocchetti for their advocacy. He asked

Dr. Grannemann to provide information on the zoom call scheduled for tomorrow on this topic.

Dr. Grannemann reported that there was a virtual call tomorrow at noon with other gateway communities and so far, there were 29 participants.

**Ms. Sullivan: Day on the Hill.**

Ms. Sullivan gave an overview of the event. She praised Dr. Marotta and her team for their work on the budget and indicated that many of the cuts were in the superintendent's office. She requested her colleagues sign up for the event on May 6, 2024, at the state house.

Attorney Rosa: An update on student absenteeism data and a discussion around ongoing and future plans to reduce chronic absenteeism and absenteeism in general [Updated-final PPT for School Comm March 28.pdf](#). Attorney Rosa had asked the superintendent to provide information on attendance matters within the school district.

Ms. Lorna Marchant, Supervisor of Attendance began a presentation on attendance data dated March 28, 2024. She referenced the tier 1 (universal supports), tier 2 (early intervention) and tier 3 (intensive intervention) interventions.

Ms. Ferguson found the presentation to be a very insightful and inclusive one. She appreciated the parental and student responsibility for resolving attendance issues.

Dr. Story thanked Mrs. Marchant for her service to the district. She was curious about the process to address chronic absenteeism.

Ms. Marchant reviewed the process starting with the classroom teacher along with follow-up outreach efforts including intervention plans which are personalized to the student. She commented on the attendance panel (with other agencies) that worked together with parents.

Dr. Story questioned the accountability data, especially with sub-groups.

Ms. Marchant responded that many of the communications are in the native language of the parents to facilitate the work.

Ms. Sullivan stated it was a national issue and was especially deeply concerned with the high school attendance rates, i.e., grade 10 and graduation rates. She asked about possible remedies.

Ms. Marchant replied that under Dr. Marotta's direction, there were extensive efforts at the high school to find alternative pathways for students. She believed there was stability and strength of leadership at the high school that would yield positive results.

Attorney Rosa inquired about high and low attendance definitions.

Ms. Marchant answered it was a DESE definition and there was an unclear description. She noted that March 11 equaled the 120<sup>th</sup> day. Ms. Marchant stated it would take a lot of work to keep on track with these improved attendance numbers.

Attorney Rosa commented on the "Strive for 5" campaign, where the goal was to miss no more than five (5) days of school and asked if this effort would be successful in Haverhill.

Ms. Marchant noted other efforts that had been implemented in the district and others could be explored

as potential opportunities.

In regards to Mrs. Lalumiere's comment on different children in the data, Ms. Marchant agreed it might be interesting to explore in different ways.

Mrs. Lalumiere thanked Ms. Marchant for her efforts.

Ms. Collins expressed appreciation to Ms. Marchant and asked about the root causes of absenteeism and wondered about the implications of mental health issues.

Ms. Marchant offered a personalized approach to mental health matters with students, including other community agencies and utilizing clinical assessment tools.

Ms. Collins related there was a three (3) day hold in the emergency room for students who are having mental health issues could be extended without receiving services.

Ms. Marchant explained the court clinic to avoid emergency room visits. She referenced transitional plans such as a bridge program to acclimate the student back into the school environment.

Dr. Story shared Ms. Sullivan's concerns about the high school data. She urged being more supportive and less punitive with attendance issues.

In relation to Gateway, Dr. Marotta commented that this school's attendance data will not be the best and that the school was an option for students who were not successful in the traditional school environment.

Dr. Story wanted to explore improvement in attendance for students at Gateway and replicate at the high school.

Ms. Sullivan asked if the formula changed for chronically absent students.

Ms. Marchant replied that it had not changed from 10%,

Superintendent Marotta clarified during the pandemic it had been 20%.

Ms. Marchant had used the 10% criteria.

Ms. Diaz commented that boredom was a reason for absenteeism and the need to teach other subjects to engage students.

Mrs. Lalumiere suggested a survey to explore other topics and gather information from students. She asked the superintendent about the groups that were addressing attendance.

Superintendent Marotta replied that in the community, Haverhill Promise and within the schools, there were attendance liaisons etc. She noted that there had been changes to the curriculum based on student preference.

Ms. Sullivan had attended a student forum that she and Dr. Grannemann had attended and the main issues were bathrooms, buses, and adding languages (Portuguese).

Ms. Ferguson left the meeting at this time.

**Subcommittee Reports.** Policy Subcommittee: Revote of agenda items from the March 14, 2024, meeting to address possible open meeting law issue. Items: BHE: Use of Electronic Messaging by School Committee Members [BHE- \(3\).pdf](#); EHAA: District Security Relating to Technology [EHAA \(1\) \(1\).pdf](#); EHB: Data and Records Retention: [EHB-update-1.22.24 \(1\).pdf](#); GBEE: Personnel Use of Technology [GBEE \(1\) \(1\).pdf](#); IJND: Access to Digital Resources [IJND \(1\).pdf](#); IJNDB: Use of Technology in Instruction [IJNDB .pdf](#); IJNDC: Acceptable Use of Digital Resources [IJNDC DJ Version \(1\).pdf](#) and JICJ: Student Use of Technology in Schools [JICJ \(1\).pdf](#) to be added to agenda of March 28, 2024, for re-discussion and vote.

A motion was made by Attorney Rosa to approve Policy BHE - Use of Electronic Messaging by School Committee Members. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote and the results were the following:

Ms. Collins	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes		

9 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 Policy EHAA - District Security Relating to Technology. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote and the results were the following:

Ms. Collins	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes		

9 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 Policy EHB: Data and Records Retention. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote and the results were the following:

Ms. Collins	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes		

9 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 Policy GBEE - Personnel Use of Technology. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote and the results were the following:

Ms. Collins	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes		

9 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 Policy IJND - Access to Digital Resources. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote and the results were the following:

Ms. Collins	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes		

9 members voted in the affirmative  
0 members voted in the negative  
0 members abstained

Motion passes

A motion was made by Attorney Rosa to approve IJNDB - Use of Technology in Instruction. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote and the results were the following:

Ms. Collins	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes		

9 members voted in the affirmative  
0 members voted in the negative  
0 members abstained

Motion passes

A motion was made by Attorney Rosa to approve Policy IJNDC - Acceptable Use of Digital Resources. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote and the results were the following:

Ms. Collins	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes		

9 members voted in the affirmative  
0 members voted in the negative  
0 members abstained

Motion passes

A motion was made by Attorney Rosa to approve Policy JICJ - Student Use of Technology in Schools. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote and the results were the following:

Ms. Collins	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes		

9 members voted in the affirmative  
0 members voted in the negative  
0 members abstained

Motion passes

Mayor Barrett read the following item for the next agenda: Policy Subcommittee: Revote of agenda items from the March 14, 2024, meeting to address possible open meeting law issues. Item Policy BDFB Appointments to the Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School – School Committee [03.14.24 Whittier Representative Policy 03.14.24 \(2\).docx.pdf](#) to be added to the agenda of the April 11, 2024, for



re-discussion and vote.

**New Business.**

Superintendent's Recommendation to approve Warrant Number EV2024030329, and EV20240328B, totaling \$1,821,797.22, [Detailed Warrant EV20240329 and EV20240329B \(1\).pdf](#) [Combined Warrant EV20240329 and EV20240329B.pdf](#) as indicated in the agenda material.

A motion was made by Attorney Rosa to approve Warrant Number EV2024030329, and EV20240328B, totaling \$1,821,797.22. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote and the results were the following:

Ms. Collins	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes		

9 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Superintendent's Recommendation to approve Warrant Number 20240329A totaling \$19,911.91, [Detailed Warrant EV20240329A.pdf](#) [Combined Warrant EV20240329A.pdf](#) as indicated in the agenda material.

A motion was made by Ms. Sullivan to approve Warrant Number 20240329A totaling \$19,911.91. Attorney Rosa seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote and the results were the following:

Ms. Collins	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Abstain
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes		

8 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

1 member abstained

Due to technical issues, Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello was in attendance but she could not be heard nor her votes recorded in the roll call votes.

**Items by Consensus.**

Superintendent's Recommendation for Approval of the Hybrid Regular Meeting Minutes of March 14, 2024, [Final Edit for Approval Hybrid Regular Meeting Minutes 03.14.24.docx.pdf](#) and FY25 Budget Workshop Minutes of March 21, 2024, [Final Edit for Approval FY25 Budget Workshop Minutes 03.21.24.docx.pdf](#); the Use of Facilities [UOF 03.28.24.pdf](#) and the field trip request(s) [Washington DC Field Trip \(1\).pdf](#) [Europe Field Trip.pdf](#) as indicated in the agenda material.

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to approve the items by consensus. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote and the results were the following:

Ms. Collins	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes



Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes		

9 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

A motion was made by Attorney Magliocchetti to go into executive session (City Hall, Room 206) to review the proposed collective bargaining agreement with the administrators' group {Haverhill Public Schools' Administrative and Supervisory Group), to discuss negotiation strategies with the ESP unit (HEA), along with the review and approval of the executive session minutes of March 14, 2024 (to remain confidential) if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares and to not reconvene in open session. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote and the results were the following:

Ms. Collins	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Ms. Diaz	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Attorney Magliocchetti	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes		

9 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained