



Haverhill Public Schools - School Committee Hybrid Regular Meeting Minutes of September 26, 2024

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

Roll Call.

Mayor Barrett, Chairperson called the meeting to order (7:02 pm) and requested a roll call vote:

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

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.

Dr. Story: Girl Scouts Troop 67111 Bronze Award project presentation of game board.
Girl Scout Troop 67111 led the school committee and audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment. There was no one present in person or remotely for public comment.

The agenda item entitled Dr. Story: Girl Scouts Troop 67111 Bronze Award project presentation of game board was taken out of the agenda order.

Dr. Story related that last spring the girl scout troop had presented a proposal to develop a game for distribution to the elementary schools. The following girl scouts: Ayla Wilson, Hallie Lesage, Olivia Levesque and Charlotte Mahoney showed the final product Slipper City game. Ms. Kay Wilson, Leader and Ms. Michelle Wickmire, Co-leader were also in attendance.

Superintendent Marotta announced that the elementary principals were attending tonight's meeting.

Superintendent Comments/Reports.

2024 MCAS Results Presentation [Haverhill 2024 MCAS.pptx \(1\).pdf](#).

Mrs. Antkowiak, Chief of Teaching, Learning and Leading began the presentation with the following information:

Boston Herald Reported:

- MCAS results for 2024 showed more “concerning” results than the optimistically trending 2023 results and continued lagging well behind pre-pandemic scores, state education officials announced Tuesday.

State Results Show:

- ELA scores across the state showed lower achievement in all grades from 2023.
- Math results show improved achievement in 3rd grade amongst relatively flat results in most grades

- Science results show improved achievement in grades 5 and 10 with lower achievement in grade 8

High School Principal Michael Downs reviewed the highlights for the school and the focus of academic improvement for this year. He acknowledged the high school results showed some improvement in chronic absenteeism and noted some of the changes that had been made at the school.

There were questions by several school committee members regarding attendance.

Golden Hill Principal Paula Rodriguez provided an assessment of the Grades 3-8 ELA results.

Attorney Rosa asked for clarification on the Wit and Wisdom Pilot Schools.

Mrs. Antkowiak responded that all the pilot schools did better than other schools.

Mrs. Lalumiere asked about the student with disabilities (SWD) difference with the state 4% vs. 11%. It was noted that Ms. Ibanez would be addressing this issue later in the meeting.

Hunking Principal Timothy Betty reviewed the Grades 3-8 Math results. He highlighted the Eureka Math Squared program improvements at many schools. Mr. Betty noted there was room for improvement.

Attorney Rosa asked about the age that students usually receive cell phones.

Mr. Betty related that there was prevalent use of cell phones by students especially at younger age groups.

Interim JG Whittier Principal/STEM Curriculum Supervisor Kevin Higginbottom commented on the encouraging Grades 5 and 8 Science results, but stated there was more work needed with this subject matter. He acknowledged the hard work of middle school teachers.

Attorney Rosa asked if the budget request several years ago had resulted in the closing of the achievement gap between HPS and MA.

Mr. Higginbottom responded that the investment in curriculum materials by the school committee in recent years, had caused these improvements in many areas.

ELA Curriculum Supervisor Jennifer Peterson provided an overview of English Language Arts Annual Comparisons, ELA Sub-Groups Grades 3-8, and ELA Sub-Groups Grade 10. She announced a new curriculum implementation and was hopeful it would result in improvement.

Ms. Sullivan pointed out the dramatically lower scores for students with disabilities in HPS versus the state.

Dr. Grannemann reflected on the significant hard work conducted in the district post-pandemic. He highlighted the growth percentages as a bright spot and believed the district was on the right track. Dr. Grannemann recommended focusing on the many areas that were showing improvements.

Dr. Story was concerned with the deficiencies in HPS. She asked for the ways that the district was incorporating targeted intervention.

Ms. Peterson provided some of the efforts. She noted that the interventions and coaches reviewed the iReady data, along with the incorporation of students participating in 6–8-week intervals for added efforts. Ms. Peterson explained that there was one (1) interventionist at the high school in grade 9.

Math Curriculum Supervisor Kate Lally offered an analysis of Mathematics Annual Comparisons, Math Sub-Groups, Grades 3-8, and Math Sub-Groups, Grade 10. She noted that grade 10 needed significant efforts to improve the scores.

Multilingual Curriculum Supervisor Heidi Perez referenced the focus on conceptual thinking as it relates to math instruction. She stated that ML and Sped teachers were collaborating on strategies to improve student learning.

Executive Director of Special Education and Student Support Services Deborah Ibanez offered a summary of the MCAS results for Special Education. She reported on the movement away from alternative portfolios to MCAS based on a citation from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Ms. Ibanez noted the receipt of the inclusion grant through Representative Vargas' assistance. She was focusing on fulfilling the IEP requirements, since there was a deficiency based on her walkthroughs.

Superintendent Marotta believed it was an obligation for the district to transition from 5%-6% of students using the alternative portfolios which did not allow for students to graduate from high school diploma.

Ms. Ibanez re-counted the many programs designed for sped students aged 18-22.

In reference to Mrs. Lalumiere's question on co-teaching relationships, Ms. Ibanez answered that there were several partnerships in the district.

Mrs. Lalumiere asked about licensure designations for special education teachers.

Ms. Ibanez replied that most educators had a licensure in Moderate disabilities, with a few ELA and Math. She noted that individuals with dual licensure were always a benefit.

Dr. Story inquired about walk-throughs.

The superintendent answered that there were no evaluation comments, but more a theme for the grade or subject matter.

Ms. Ibanez commented that there was a need to have better communication efforts to fulfill the student needs at the building level.

Dr. Story asked about the proper staffing for fulfilling the learning needs for special education students. She was encouraged by the Wit and Wisdom program.

Ms. Diaz asked about staffing for students on IEPs.

Ms. Ibanez replied that there was yearly professional development to guarantee the reading of IEPs. She provided the numbers of sped teachers in the district.

Attorney Rosa commented that several autistic students could pass the MCAS but were not allowed to participate in the ages 18-22 program (Learning for Life) and would not obtain employment.

Ms. Ibanez related that the DESE-written letter regarding pursuing the portfolio versus MCAS; noting that it was not an easy letter for parents to read and acknowledge the content.

Dr. Marotta explained that in the grades 5-8 buildings, there was a Morton-Gillingham program with trained staff in those buildings.

Ms. Ibanez answered that the program involved a huge commitment. She announced the implementation of bocce ball and the installation of a court at Hunking School.

Dr. Marotta commented on the improved instruction in general education and was concerned with “the room down the hall” for special education. She felt the implementation of Wit and Wisdom was a significant improvement.

Supervisor of Attendance Lorna Marchant offered a summary of MCAS Attendance Data noting the making inroads in the improvement of attendance levels.

Attorney Rosa noted the direct connection between attendance and MCAS scores. He emphasized the importance of students attending school each day.

Mrs. Marchant explained the intervention plan for chronically absent students. She stated that there were extensive efforts to educate parents on the need for good attendance.

Attorney Rosa asked for data on attendance and the test scores. He stated that educators are doing the job. Attorney Rosa was concerned that grades 3-5 students (70%) were not reading at grade level.

Ms. Sullivan inquired about attendance improvement efforts in other districts. She noted the importance of belonging (being part of something and wanting to be there) in obtaining good attendance. Ms. Sullivan asked the superintendent to have conversations with other superintendents at the upcoming joint conference in November to obtain some different perspectives.

Superintendent Marotta thanked all staff for some of the significant growth. She explained that the last several years were the most challenging for educators and encouraged the staff to not give up since the district was on an improvement track.

Dr. Story asked about interventions and support for students at Haverhill High School and Gateway Academy.

Superintendent Marotta offered that there were different conversations since Gateway students were endangered to dropping out of school and high school students have more behavioral issues. She referenced an organization TNTP that provided excellent support through professional development at Tilton and Nettle and was hopefully with an amount of state money could assist with behavioral issues which negatively impact attendance and learning at HHS. Dr. Marotta stated the district would continue its efforts and receive assistance from agencies to continue to move forward with its endeavors.

Lahey Behavioral Health Services.

Dr. Marotta stated the community was concerned that Lahey Behavioral Health was closing down its Haverhill office.

Ms. Dion reported that this organization was closing its out-patient clinic. She would provide updates as soon as information became available to the district and would be discussing options with Lahey. Ms. Dion explained that it impacted school-based counseling and other counseling services. She noted that services

would be provided until the end of the calendar year (December 2024). Ms. Dion related that Lahey would be sending out notices to clients and assisting in finding other providers. She stated that her staff were discussing options for counseling services on an individual basis.

Mayor Barrett reported that as a result of this news, her office had reached out to the state.

Attorney Rosa commented on the community-wide concern and there needed to be an answer to why the agency was leaving the district. He was especially alarmed by wait lists for mental health services.

School Committee Reports/Communications.

Dr. Story: Discussion of expectations for Whittier Tech representative reports to Haverhill School Committee.

Dr. Story referenced the new policy with reports to the school committee at the first meeting in October, February and May.

Mayor Barrett would extend an invitation to the representatives. She commented on the receipt of a recent communication from Mr. Early.

Mrs. Lalumiere suggested information on the partnership between Whittier Regional and Northern Essex Community College.

Dr. Story: Superintendent Evaluation and Goal Setting.

Dr. Story believed that the process should start with goal setting.

Attorney Rosa asked about the evaluation cycle.

Dr. Story responded that at this time there would be goal setting with the formative evaluation by July 2025 and summative evaluation by July 2026.

Attorney Rosa suggested a committee to address this subject to develop the schedule.

Superintendent Marotta commented that the chair and vice chair met with her to develop goals and schedule.

Mayor Barrett would follow up with the vice chair and superintendent.

Dr. Story: Clarification of subcommittee roles, responsibilities, and operating procedures.

Dr. Story referenced the recent strategic planning subcommittee and how that meeting was scheduled and held as a special meeting, since there was confusion. She supported a clear process with all subcommittee members involved in the decision-making. Dr. Story believed it was important to have a description of the subcommittees. She was disappointed in last week's meeting.

Dr. Grannemann asked the chair to call the meeting. He believed that subcommittee work was important.

Attorney Rosa agreed that it would make sense to understand the work of each subcommittee. He stressed that the subcommittee could not take any actions, the members provided recommendations to the full school committee. Attorney Rosa replied that any financial matters were referred to the finance subcommittee.

Dr. Story asked for a paragraph description of each subcommittee. She expressed disappointment in the recent meeting process and asked as a courtesy that the subcommittee be consulted prior to the scheduling.

Ms. Diaz felt the same way and expressed her confusion regarding the last meeting.

Mrs. Lalumiere suggested Attorney Magliocchetti and another member work on the descriptions.

Dr. Grannemann communicated with the chair regarding scheduling the meeting.

A motion was made by Dr. Story to request Attorney Magliocchetti and another member to write descriptions of each subcommittee for review at a subsequent meeting. Mrs. Lalumiere seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Ms. Diaz	Yes	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes

8 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Dr. Grannemann: Designate delegate for Massachusetts Association of School Committees' Annual Meeting [2024-MASC-Resolutions.pdf](#), [2024 Report of the Resolutions Committee.docx.pdf](#), [delegateformsecondnotice24.pdf](#), [conferencebrochure24.pdf](#).

Dr. Grannemann announced the upcoming MASC annual meeting and asked for a designee to attend and vote on the resolutions at the next meeting. He proposed waiting until the next meeting to vote on the resolutions.

After a brief discussion, the committee agreed to postpone any action on the resolutions at this meeting.

A motion was made by Attorney Rosa to designate Dr. Grannemann as the MASC Voting Delegate. Dr. Story seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Ms. Diaz	Yes	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes

8 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Subcommittee Reports.

Ms. Sullivan: Update on the recent Strategic Planning Subcommittee Meeting held on Thursday, September 19, 2024 [Meet with Literacy Sub Committee.pdf](#).

Ms. Sullivan reported that all members were invited to the meeting to address the strategic planning subcommittee's primary goal. She provided a summary of the meeting and noted that the presentation was included in tonight's meeting materials.

New Business.

Superintendent's Recommendation to approve Warrant Number EV202400927 and EV20240927B totaling \$4,423,317.12 [Warrant EV20240927.pdf](#), as indicated in the agenda material.

A motion was made by Ms. Sullivan to approve Warrant Number EV202400927 and EV20240927B totaling \$4,423,317.12. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Ms. Diaz	Yes	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes

8 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Superintendent's Recommendation for items to be declared surplus and disposed of in accordance with city ordinances [Surplus 09.26.24.pdf](#), as indicated in the agenda material.

A motion was made by Attorney Rosa to declare surplus and dispose of in accordance with city ordinances the items indicated in the agenda material. Ms. Sullivan seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Ms. Diaz	Yes	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes

8 members voted in the affirmative

Motion passes

0 members voted in the negative

0 members abstained

Items by Consensus.

Superintendent's Recommendation for approval of the Hybrid Regular Meeting Minutes of September 12, [Final Edit for Approval Hybrid Regular Meeting Minutes 09.12.24 \(1\).pdf](#), as indicated in the agenda material.

A motion was made by Ms. Sullivan to approve the Hybrid Regular Meeting Minutes of September 12, 2024 as indicated in the agenda material. Attorney Rosa seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Ms. Diaz	Yes	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardello	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes

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

Motion passes

A motion was made by Ms. Sullivan to approve the use of facilities [UOF 09.26.24.pdf](#), as indicated in the agenda. Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Ms. Diaz	Yes	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes

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

Motion passes

A motion was made by Ms. Sullivan to adjourn the meeting (9:32 pm). Ms. Diaz seconded the motion. The mayor requested a roll call vote with the following results:

Ms. Diaz	Yes	Mrs. Ryan-Ciardiello	Yes
Dr. Grannemann	Yes	Dr. Story	Yes
Mrs. Lalumiere	Yes	Ms. Sullivan	Yes
Attorney Rosa	Yes	Mayor Barrett	Yes

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

Motion passes