

**HOLLIS SCHOOL BOARD
JULY 20, 2020
MEETING MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Hollis School Board was conducted on Monday, July 20, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. at the Hollis Upper Elementary School.

Robert Mann, Chairman, presided:

Members of the Board Present: Tammy Fareed, Vice Chairman
Brooke Arthur, Secretary
Amy Kellner
Carryl Roy

Members of the Board Absent:

Also Participating: Andrew Corey, Superintendent
Gina Bergskaug, Assistant Superintendent
Bob Thompson, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services

APPOINTMENT OF PROCESS OBSERVER

Chairman Mann appointed Amy Kellner to serve as Process Observer.

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

Member Roy suggested public input be moved to follow the presentation on the proposed re-opening plan.

There being no objection, the agenda was amended, as requested.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Hollis School Board [June 17, 2020](#)

The following amendments were was offered:

- Page 3, Line 41; “teacher” should be plural
- Page 5, Line 10; replace “offered” with “offer”
- Page 6, Line 20; insert “member” following “staff”

**MOTION BY MEMBER ARTHUR TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER KELLNER
MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0**

NOMINATIONS/RESIGNATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE

Superintendent Corey informed the Board of a request received from citizens/taxpayers that budgetary items impacted by COVID-19 be reviewed. He responded noting the Board would discuss the topic at its August meeting. At that time, the Administration will bring forward the MS25 and finalized numbers. Auditors are in-house next week.

Chairman Mann noted receipt of numerous emails from community members on a variety of issues in relation to the re-opening. The information was consolidated and categorized. Each member of the Board was assigned a category for which they would lead the discussion/response.

DISCUSSION

- Return to School Building Plan 2020-2021

Superintendent Corey spoke of the yeoman's work that has gone into the Return to School Building Plan (Plan). The Plan will be introduced to each of the school boards in meetings scheduled to occur over the next few evenings. Input from the Board and public will be used in the next review of the Plan. Information continues to come in from the State, which will be used to update the Plan. New information was received from the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) earlier in the day.

Bob Thompson, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services, stressed the importance of remembering the schools never closed; in March when the Governor issued his Executive Order closing the schools, we went into remote learning. It is important, when talking about the 2020-2021 school year, that we note the discussion is around re-opening of our buildings.

The SAU is offering parents the opportunity to have their children remain in remote learning or return to the physical school environment. The decision to offer the two choices is based upon current local conditions. Currently, there are zero active cases of COVID in the two communities. Since May, the data has been trending positively for our State; number of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths is decreasing. Should this trend continue, it is important to have a solid plan for returning students to our buildings. We also need to have a plan in place in the event numbers trend in the opposite direction.

This is about parent choice, and the number of parents the Administration has talked to since schools went into remote learning that have deep concerns about the social-emotional wellbeing of their children; depression, isolation, and concerns that perhaps remote learning for their child is second best to an in-person education. We want to honor that and provide our parents with an option to return to the physical environment. Likewise, there have been a number of conversations with parents who are really deeply concerned; perhaps their child or a member of their family is immune compromised or perhaps they are just not comfortable with the risk tolerance that is needed to send your children to school during a pandemic. We want to honor that as well.

To develop a comprehensive return to school model, SAU41 created a task force of working groups comprised of more than 50 school district stakeholders.

The process for planning the 2020-2021 school year began in April. On April 16th, Governor Sununu issued an Executive Order saying that all schools would remain in remote learning for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. At that time, the Task Force began developing plans for the return to the school environment, which included analyzing dozens of government and non-government reports, participating in global phone conferences and State level conversations with various agencies and organizations, e.g. DOE, DHHS, EPA.

The Incident Command System (ICS) plays an important role when trying to develop streamlined communication and decision making models. ICS is utilized in emergency management, which is something the SAU does really well. That existing emergency management model was applied to the reopening of the schools. A framework was developed based upon critical areas that require attention if looking to provide either a remote option or an in-school option. Many of the reports the Task Force leaned heavily on were from American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) (June 25th report), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Center for Disease Control (CDC), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Learning Policy Institute (LPI) (identified

countries that have already reopened their schools and what those openings look like), National Association of School Nurses (NASN), National Council on School Facilities (NCSF), New Hampshire Grades K-12 Back-To-School Guidance (issued last week), New Hampshire School Nurses Association (NHSNA), and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Each one looks at reopening through a very different lens. Many of the reports provide considerations; things that needed to be thought about before considering a final plan for the reopening of schools. Utilizing the ICS they were able to separate the discussion points into several categories, e.g., instructional, technology, health & safety, etc. Stakeholders from within the buildings were engaged (teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, etc.), and each one was assigned to one of the committees with representation from each one of the school districts. They were given the list of considerations from the reports that were analyzed. Each one of the groups was facilitated by either a building principal or assistant principal. Facilitators met weekly with SAU Administration to report on progress and brainstorm. There were over 60 stakeholders throughout the process. Using those guiding resources, they developed a set of recommendations.

Once the work of the sub-committees was completed, a community advisory group was established. That group was made up of physicians, nurses, mental health professionals; individuals having real specific expertise when it comes to health and safety. This group vetted the very lengthy plan the team came up with. A summary report was created based upon the recommendations and the vetting of the advisory group, which is what was contained in the agenda packet.

Gina Bergskaug, Assistant Superintendent, spoke of surveys sent out at the end of the 2019-2020 school year; one to families and a separate one to teachers and support staff who participated in instruction with our students. What was telling and guided some of the work of the team was the family survey. This question was asked directly “Based on what we know today, if precautions are taken, but social distancing was not possible, would your child attend school in person in the fall?” There were highs and lows with an average of 72% yes. That told her our numbers in the fall, if we were to open, were already going to be reduced. That would assist with the ability to hold in-person school knowing that we would have a remote option for those that needed it.

The summary document outlines the options. Families need to reflect on their personal risk, and make the choice that is best for them. Every family has their own dynamics and their own comfort level with returning to school.

Option 1 is return to in-person school on September 3rd. Parents would also select if they were to drop off and pick up their child from school or, if needed, select bus transportation with mandatory wearing of masks. In addition, all students will need a dedicated device with them at all times. They can either bring their own device, assuming it meets the specifications, or utilize a district loaned device.

The other option is students and families can choose to resume remote learning on September 3rd. Those families would review and accept remote learning 2.0, which incorporates improvements/changes that have been made to the process as a result of responses to a survey distributed to families and faculty. Those students would also need a personal dedicated device. If needed, one could be provided by the district.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug discussed how each of the options are outlined:

In-Person Learning

Prior to students arriving on campus, parents will assess each child using a brief screening tool including taking a daily temperature. Parents would be required to contact the school to report any symptoms. Parents are to send their students to school only if they are symptom free and free of exposure. Parents would drop the students off at the designated time or at the bus stop. Students arrive and are required to follow the protocol for entering the school building, including wearing a mask and maintaining physical distancing.

Early September

Training will be provided to students on personal and public health measures, new procedures in the school building, which includes identifying which spaces are not available (library, etc.), and training on new technology tools used in the classroom (including passwords). As guidance around COVID-19 changes over the course of the year, students will be provided with updated training.

Arrival

Students will use hand sanitizer at the station prior to entering the classroom and will follow procedures and walk straight to their assigned desk, which is physically distanced per CDC guidelines (6'). Noted was that she and Assistant Superintendent Thompson visited each of the classrooms and physically moved and measured all desks. They identified that the classrooms in the elementary schools can have 20 student desks with 6' of separation. That sometimes requires the removal of other furniture, but is possible. Many of our specifications are at or below 20. If taking roughly 72% of that, we are well within the space recommendations for the existing classrooms. Students would have their own set of materials, including a charged Chromebook or similar. Elementary students would remain in their homeroom and specialists would travel to them. Food service will offer bagged breakfast and lunch to those interested.

During the Day

If a student or staff member displays symptoms of COVID, they will be masked, brought to the secondary nurse's office (isolation station), and sent home. A doctor's clearance or clearance by the school nurse will be required for students to return to school. Guidance released earlier in the day states for individuals symptomatic and confirmed with COVID-19 requirements are that at least 10 days have passed from when symptoms first appeared, at least 24 hours since the last fever, symptoms have improved, etc. Staff members will be required to follow the established procedures in Human Resources.

In the case of a positive COVID test, notification will take place, per State requirements, and contact tracing will begin. Response varies based on tracing. As an example, a response to a preschooler in a class of 8 students where a parent dropped off the student who went straight to the classroom would be different than a situation with a high school student who took the bus, traveled to 7 different classrooms with 7 different groupings of students, etc. She spoke of the suspected case the District had back in March where the District analyzed the situation and possible exposure, and decided, out of an abundance of caution, believed to be most appropriate given the tracing that was completed. The same would be true for the school year.

During the Day & Dismissal

Students will wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds periodically. When soap and water are not available, they will use hand sanitizer at the classroom station. Students will have a staggered dismissal to alleviate traffic caused by additional personal vehicles. Students will bring their device home each afternoon to charge and complete homework, as necessary.

Remote Learning 2.0

Direct instruction will follow the in-person instruction model in regard to the schedule and expectations for learning. Daily live Zoom sessions are required for instruction. Session length and daily frequency are based on district determined best practice, e.g., what a 15-year old is expected to participate in varies greatly from what a 5-year-old is expected to participate in with regard to screen time. Specific expectations for learning will be shared at the onset by the teacher including the mandatory specials in elementary. In the spring, some of the specials became optional; if and when you could participate. As part of the mandated educational curriculum, they will be required in remote learning. Pacing will mirror the in person instructional model. Assessment expectations will be shared at the onset.

Specifics

- Elementary

There will be a required morning meeting. There will be daily Math and ELA mini lessons. Science/Social Studies will be every other day. After the mini lessons, there will be classwork to participate in. After the whole class instruction there will be practice, remediation, and small group instruction. Students will participate in small group instruction potentially via a separate Zoom invite or in a breakout room within the Zoom. Feedback will be provided in an identified format.

- Secondary

ROCK/CAV Block provided. Students log into Zoom following daily schedule. Practice to follow mini lesson. Homework assigned for all students whether in person or remote and will be assigned over Google Classroom. Feedback provided in identified format.

Assistant Superintendent Thompson spoke of the two documents created; one with the various working groups (lengthy) and a Summary Report, which was included with the [agenda](#). The summary report was outlined.

Health & Safety

There will be daily health screenings of students that parents are expected to do, which will include temperature checks. A symptoms checklist would have to be completed daily. There have been a small number of students in special education who have been receiving onsite services. Many of the health & safety protocols recommended have been in place since March, and have been very effective.

Targeted temperature checks will be conducted by the school nurse; students visiting the office, students returning from an absence (for any reason). Masks will be required when social distancing is not possible; at all times on the school bus, in the hallways, if there is a classroom where desks are not spaced 6' apart. Dismissal times will be staggered (different in each building based on the schedule). There will be reduced student movement. Hand sanitizer and wipes will be available in classrooms and common areas.

Instructional

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug went over the Plan for instruction. Before last year ended there was an extensive review of the year of curriculum. There was an expectation that some content was simply not covered in remote learning. The assumption was that there was a good chance that not the entire year was covered last year given the quick jump to remote learning. In the professional development days that follow the school year, teachers began the process of identifying specifically what was not covered, and then shared that information, through their Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), with the next grade level. That work will continue if it was not already completed. Collaboration time will be built in for teachers to discuss student progress. There will be development of enhanced remediation for struggling students. Instruction in personal/public health measures will be provided for students. Where appropriate, instruction will be moved outdoors. Recommended is an increase in the number of recesses per day for the onsite model so that students are able to begin to reacclimate to working with their peers. Shared instructional materials and spaces will be eliminated. Elementary specials will take place in the homeroom classroom.

Technology

All students will have access to their own device. Students will be assigned a school laptop when one is not available at home, with the expectation that devices will come to school charged each day.

Human Resources

There will be in place restrictions on volunteers. Staff development will be provided in evidenced-based public health practices and the use of digital tools. In surveying teachers, tools that were most beneficial, those utilized most frequently, and those believed to be critically important to advance instruction, were identified. Those are the ones that will continue to be used. Videos and how-to documents will be provided for teachers as well as families for students who are in remote. Custodial responsibilities will be adjusted to include increased deep cleaning. As part of the approved budget, there is an additional sub-nurse shared amongst the 6 buildings. Out-of-state professional development for teachers will be prohibited.

Facilities

Assistant Superintendent Thompson spoke of the expansion of the health offices in all 6 of the buildings within SAU41 to include an additional site; one will be for routine traffic and the second auxiliary location is where any student identified as being symptomatic would be sent. The location of auxiliary sites was specific to ensure, if needed, students could be taken out of the building safely and quickly. Access to common areas will be reduced, e.g., computer labs would not be needed with each student having his/her own device and the space could be utilized, if needed, for the nurse auxiliary space or additional classroom instructional space. Access to lockers will be restricted. Excess furniture will be removed from classrooms to accommodate social distancing. The SAU is contracting with storage providers to allow for the removal of excess furniture. Airflow will be increased by opening windows and interior doors when appropriate. An independent consultant has been hired to review the HVAC system.

Student Services

Students who are unable to attend physical school will have access to a remote environment. Students will have increased socialization time. At an elementary school level, that could mean an additional morning meeting or additional recess. At the middle school, it could be added advisory time or an extended outdoor lunch time, and at the high school it could be expanded CAV Block. Each school will further develop their social-emotional programming. Last year the District implemented the Choose Love Program. IEP/504 and student progress meetings will be held remotely. Staff will receive training in the research-based program Mental Health First Aid.

Food Service

The District will move to a grab and go breakfast/lunch option for students including students who are in remote learning. A cashless purchase model will be utilized. No student will be refused. There will be limited occupancy in the cafeteria during lunch times. Donated food items are prohibited. Concessions at sporting events will be suspended.

Extra-Curricular

Guidelines are driven by the NHIAA. There will be temperature checks for students and no mask requirement. Student will bring their own water. There will be limited public attendance at games. Parents will remain in their vehicle during student pick-up. There will be no access to locker rooms by opposing teams, and limited facility use by outside groups. School sponsored overnight travel is suspended.

Transportation

Parents are strongly encouraged to provide transportation. Face masks and use of hand sanitizer are required for bus travel. There will be assigned seating (allows siblings to sit together and for easy identification of where students were sitting in the event of an outbreak), and when possible, windows will remain open. There will be routine daily sanitizing of buses. There are Federal regulations that limit some safety protocols being put in place on a bus, e.g., plexiglass. If a parent has the means to drive their child to school, they are asked to.

Assistant Superintendent Thompson commented the lengthy report from the committees (working document; approximately 45 pages) includes the various considerations. When looking at each one of the considerations, the groups looked at them for the three possible models; remote, hybrid, and full return. The larger document contains building level guidelines that accommodate the individual needs of each school. That document allows each school to reflect on the need for that building. Each building has developed their own reopening committee, and they can take that larger document and apply the standards as they see necessary. Those plans will be vetted through the SAU to ensure a level of consistency and that all health and safety measures are considered.

It also identifies processes and procedures, provides minimum standards/directives for remote learning, and is designed to be nimble, allowing for quick transition from each of the three models based on current conditions. With local conditions being what they are right now, it is believed the SAU can offer an on-site physical learning environment. That could change in a few weeks. If it does, the SAU may go to a hybrid model, which could be a few days a week or a fully remote model. There is the need to be able to pivot between the 3 models very quickly.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug provided examples of the material covered in the larger working document, e.g., questions posed, recommendations for addressing in the 3 models, and discussion items.

Under the heading of Human Resources, a question posed was related to the process for staff members who are unable to work or return to work, including telework. All requests would go through the typical confidential process with H.R., and all appropriate laws would be applied to every specific circumstance, e.g., CARES Act, FMLA & ADA.

The recommendation for serving lunch is a classroom model combined with electronic lunch count. At the start of the day, lunch is selected and sent to Food Service. Those specific lunches are delivered.

Under the heading of Facilities & Student Services, the committee addressed the separate isolation room for the nurse office to segregate those presenting with symptoms. With regard to progress monitoring, the District began looking at students and their progress prior to the Extended School Year (ESY). That process will be repeated in September. The thought is that there is potential regression amongst all students, not just identified students, and there is the need to understand what the possible regression is across the board. The District is creating an expanded focused RTI time, separate from class time to offer that remediation and Tier II support to all students who might need it.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug spoke of having worked together, as a community, over the past few months to develop this robust plan.

PUBLIC INPUT

Joe Garruba, 28 Winchester Drive

Spoke of the non-discrimination policy identified on the agenda, and requested public comment be permitted following the Board's presentation of that item.

Chairman Mann noted the Resolution was introduced at the SAU41 Governing Board meeting as it was one of the few times all three district boards come together. The intent is to discuss the resolution at the District level.

Member Roy suggested further amending the agenda to permit public comment following the presentation of the Resolution. Member Arthur commented she considers the initiative imperative to school reopening and important to address at this time. Vice Chairman Fareed spoke of concern time may not permit the level of discussion/consideration the Resolution deserves.

There being no objection, the agenda was further amended to permit public comment following the presentation of the Resolution.

Mr. Garruba spoke of being pleased that the Board utilized the survey results, and has acknowledged the importance of having students in school for 5 days/week for 6 hours/day. That kind of structure at the elementary school level is critical. He is grateful for the work that went into remote learning; however, feels it left students short education wise.

Agatha Connelly, 14 Sawmill Road

Thanked the Board and Administration for its leadership during this time and on the reopening plan. The SAU focus on education, health, wellbeing, and cleanliness of our students will provide an effective path to academic success in their future.

John Jesse, 57 Buttonwood Drive

Expressed gratitude for the robust plan. He believes it critically important for students to return to school, and thanked the Administration for the work. He asked for additional clarification of how the plan will be executed on a day-to-day basis. He spoke of the need for training and questioned how compliance would be tracked, and under what thresholds changes to the plan would be triggered.

Superintendent Corey stated that information would be available to families prior to the opening of schools. The Administration continues to work with the CDC and DHHS. One of the pieces learned in March was that it is a local decision. When making that initial decision he did so based on safety, which is the first measure he would look to again. The Administration will work with the administrative team to follow the data. We have outstanding school nurses who provide guidance. A community group made up of individuals having a variety of expertise (pediatricians, mental health specialists) has stepped up to work with him. Learned earlier in the day was that the temperature threshold will be 100°. He spoke of work he will do with the school boards to establish benchmarks; set dates that would allow people to transition back to school if things are getting better or transition to remote if worsening. School calendar dates will also be reviewed. The SAU traditionally conducts school the Monday and Tuesday of Thanksgiving week; may decide to do those remote as it would provide an entire week's time for deep cleaning of the facilities.

Raul Blanche, 1 Mendelssohn Drive

Echoed the remarks of previous speakers in support of the plan. He spoke of minor changes he would recommend, e.g., provide free food to everyone to minimize contact. He questioned the exit strategy and the metrics that would be looked at, and the need for a consistent mechanism of getting information out to the community-at-large.

Superintendent Corey remarked the metric still needs to be created. He meets weekly with superintendents from the southern tier of the State many of whom have the same questions. That is not necessarily where guidance is being received. Together they will come to a solution. He agrees it needs to be concrete and communicated widely. The Rotary has established a new communication, which tends to go to a different population. The SAU will work with the Rotary so that all information coming out of the SAU will be forwarded to the Rotary for their newspaper concurrently with being pushed out on social media. The hope is that all demographics in the community are reached.

Member Roy suggested all information be placed on the SAU's website. Superintendent Corey responded once the new website is up and running, the SAU will determine the 3 locations where information will be populated, and that information continually relayed to the public.

Isabelle Ramas, 9 Colburn Lane

Stated the desire to return to school to be with her friends and be able to see people her age again. She would like to be at a desk and not just sitting at a screen all day. She would like to be able to go outside and play. Her concerns are related to students not following the direction of their teachers with regard to safety measures, e.g., staying 6' apart, covering cough, wearing masks, etc. She spoke of the likelihood of being a bit nervous if there

are more than 100 people together. She stated the desire to go to school if there is a maximum of people in her grade or perhaps the entire school.

Harold Cadman, 169 Depot Road

Spoke of studies conducted in Sweden. One in Germany screened 2,000 students and determined children are not spreading the virus. One doctor claims that the children actually provide a block to the virus. He spoke of the magnitude of the effort that will be on the Board/Administration/teachers to successfully implement the plan. He questioned if the German study was taken into consideration. He provided an excerpt about mask wearing from a journal published by the CDC - non-pharmaceutical measures for pandemic influenza in non-healthcare settings, personal protective environmental measures. "Here we reviewed the evidence based on effectiveness of non-pharmaceutical personal protective measures and environmental hygiene measures in non-healthcare settings and discussed their potential inclusion in pandemic plans. Although mechanistic studies suggest potential effect of hygiene in face masks, evidence from 14 randomized controlled trials of these measures did not support a substantial effect on transmission of laboratory confirmed influenza. We similarly found limited events on the effectiveness of improved hygiene and environmental cleaning."

He went on to provide quotes from the document; "In our systematic review, we identified 10 randomized controlled trials that reported estimates of the effectiveness of face masks in reducing laboratory confirmed influenza virus infections in the community from literature published during 1946 to July 27, 2018. In pooled analysis, we found no significant reduction in influenza transmission with the use of face masks." It goes on to say "disposable medical masks, also known as surgical masks, are loose fitting devices that were designed to be worn by medical personnel to protect accidental contamination of a patient's wounds and to protect the wearer against splashes or sprays of bodily fluids. There is limited evidence of their effectiveness in preventing influenza virus transmission either when worn by the infected person for spores control or when worn by uninfected persons to reduce exposure. Our systematic review found no significant effect of face mask on transmission of laboratory confirmed influenza."

He suggested trying to mandate the wearing of face masks in schools with children does not seem like it is worth the effort.

Superintendent Corey was uncertain if he has read the exact study referenced noting the number of documents he has read and his participation with colleagues from all over Germany and England who have already re-opened via Zoom. They went through the step-by-step process of how they were successful. There is a debate around masks. At the present time, his recommendation is to use masks. If he sees data or further studies come out that invalidate the use of masks, then they would not be used. His recommendation is what he is comfortable doing for the students in the District as it is what he would do for his own children.

Mr. Cadman requested the studies reviewed by the Administration be published. Superintendent Corey stated he would be happy to both provide the information he has reviewed as well as review the study being referenced.

Pam Hicks, 8 Maple Knoll Drive

Commented on children not taking the wearing of masks or social distancing seriously. She questioned if consideration has been given to students wearing the masks in the common areas such as hallways and then being able to remove them once situated in a classroom where they can socially distance.

She questioned what measures are being taken to keep air flowing in the classrooms.

Superintendent Corey stated there will be mask breaks built into the school day. It may differ from room to room as some teachers may have a compromised system. An independent contractor has been hired to review the HVAC. That is the number one thing he has indicated - it is about airflow. The air will be turned over much quicker than traditionally done.

Ms. Hicks asked about the classrooms that do not have air conditioning. Superintendent Corey spoke of the HSMART project; Administration is in the midst of acquiring unit ventilators for classrooms as well as a new air handler, which is located on the roof (expected to be delivered and in place). He will be in receipt of a report from the contractor on all 6 buildings in the August timeframe. That information will be put out to the community.

Ms. Hicks spoke of a local dentist who has units he has put in for disinfecting, etc. Superintendent Corey stated the SAU has looked at some of those types of equipment; however, the school environment is different from a commercial building. Steps that can be taken will be.

Chairman Mann spoke of the air source heat pumps that have been installed noting they are servicing specific classrooms almost on a classroom basis. It is not a system that is servicing the entire school. There is a level of granularity and point of use with the air source heat pumps. He spoke of being interested in knowing how that benefits the HVAC picture.

Vice Chairman Fareed remarked this is topic #1 for the HSMART committee that is discussing the individual units in the different rooms in both buildings. Over the years, with the buildings having been coupled together at different times, there are different kinds of units. They are looking at how they are run, how they are filtered, how their utility for addressing this contagion issue can be optimized.

Maria Nardi, 68 Hideaway Lane

Spoke of the science of wearing masks in a social setting. There are currently studies that show they do not work. Her concern is with health effects of wearing a mask. There is science that says there are potential health risks of wearing a mask, which include something called viral load. Most children and healthy adults are asymptomatic. If you are asymptomatic, wearing a mask and happen to have small droplets of the virus in your trachea or lungs, breathing in your own humid air especially with cloth masks, will cause the virus to multiply and make you sick.

The British Medical Journal states: "A fraction of carbon dioxide previously exhaled is inhaled at each respiratory cycle. Those two phenomenon increase breathing frequency and deepness and hence increase the amount of inhaled and exhaled air. This may worsen the burden of COVID-19 if infected people wearing masks spread more contaminated air. This may also worsen the clinical condition of infected people if the enhanced breathing pushes the viral load down into their lungs." It continues; "The innate immunity efficacy is highly dependent on the viral load. If face masks determine a humid habitat where the SARS-CoV-2 virus can remain active due to the water vapor continuously provided by breathing and capturing the mask fabric, they

determine an increase in viral load and therefore they can cause a defeat of the innate immunity and an increase in infection.”

She remarked we all know the New England Journal of Medicine, the World Health Organization, the CDC all previously gave reasons why no one should wear a mask if they are not taking care of a COVID patient. She is unsure why that changed. There has been no science showing that they work and there are plenty of studies saying they are dangerous. She is concerned that her child has to wear a mask in school. Some assume if we do not want to wear a mask we are combative. She follows the science that says do not wear a mask, you need to be breathing fresh air especially when the children are asymptomatic most of the time. She stated her belief we will be making them sick.

David Lang, MD states “Walking around with an ill-fitted cloth mask is merely a reservoir for moisture and other disease causing bacteria. It most certainly will not stop any virus.” Every time you touch the mask and your face with your unwashed hands you are merely seeding your mask with any bacteria you picked up. It is basically a giant petri dish you have strapped to your face. She does not believe it to be safe to be sending kids to school with masks.

Ms. Nardi questioned if consideration has been given to the psychological health of the children.

Aaron Penkacik, 133 Dow Road

Thanked Superintendent Corey for his response to a letter he sent regarding costs recovery from COVID stating his understanding that will be addressed in August.

Stated agreement with the remarks made regarding the wearing of masks commenting on having received an email from a good friend who has a child who is mildly autistic and cannot wear a mask; keeps touching her face and pulling it off. She has given up taking her daughter anywhere for that reason. He has seen other instances where a child had been abused and had to live in a closet because of abusive parents and as a result was claustrophobic. The mental aspects in addition to other issues surrounding the wearing of masks really need to be considered.

He spoke of being pleased with the plan that was presented. He questioned if the nurses have the ability to confirm that symptoms are in fact COVID. Superintendent Corey responded no. They would be referred back to their pediatrician.

Mr. Penkacik questioned what provisions are in place for biohazard disposal of the masks. He questioned how you do contact tracing in a school environment. Superintendent Corey stated the tracing element is more assigned seating in all classrooms. The individuals seated in the vicinity would be the first priority and the second group the entire class. It gets much more difficult in the middle and high school environments. At the same time, there were instances of concern last spring, and the SAU was able to contact trace a number of the individuals and speak with families to make them aware so they could get tested.

Sheila Mandragouras, 6 Barton Road (school nurse HBMS)

Commented on the comparison of Influenza to COVID-19 stating last year approx. 60,000 people in the United States died from Influenza. COVID-19 is 2-3 times more contagious and thus far 140,000 people in the United States have died as a result. You cannot compare the two viruses. A study came out Monday about mask wearing. In MI, two hairstylists both were diagnosed retrospectively with COVID. They were insistent on following state guidelines, e.g., wore masks and had all of their clients wear masks. Stylists have close contact

with and spend a significant amount of time with their clients. Not one of the 131 clients developed COVID. It is an important study to show that mask wearing does make a difference.

They understand there are a set of students for whom mask wearing will not be possible because of health issues or they are just not able to tolerate it. For the whole community, she believes it to be very important that students and staff wear masks when possible to try to minimize the potential of a second wave, which unfortunately, statistically will probably happen.

Stephanie Jesse, 57 Buttonwood Drive

Questioned the start date given the significant training included in the Plan. Superintendent Corey stated the Administration is in discussion with the union presidents about the overall plan. They have discussed the potential of adding days prior to and after September 3rd. If it became a reality, he would have to come back to the School Board as the body that sets the opening day of the school year.

Chairman Mann reiterated emails received from community members were categorized and members of the Board were assigned a category for which they would lead the discussion/response. He requested each member bring forward 2-3 of the most frequently asked questions as well as those they themselves would like to bring forward after which consideration would be given to time remaining to address the remainder of the questions and agenda items.

Member Arthur stated her category to be student services. One of the questions was around how social and emotional needs of students will be met in a remote model. She also would like to hear more about whether the District is looking at the curriculum as a whole from a trauma informed perspective.

Assistant Superintendent Thompson remarked one of the things they failed to mention is that some of the work is ongoing; particularly around remote and social-emotional learning. There is a social-emotional district-wide committee that will meet prior to the start of school to discuss what strategic planning looks like in terms of social-emotional learning. Each building also has a building level committee. A number of administrators and teachers have been trained in trauma informed schools. We are at the beginning phases of implementing some of that work.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted much of the work on social-emotional learning will occur during morning meeting, ROCK, and CavBlock, which will be mandatory for remote learning. In remote learning 1.0 and again in 2.0, individual and student groups work with their school counselors and/or teachers based on their individual needs. Teachers do what they do best, which is take a look at their students, see what they need, and try to meet that need as best they can. If they cannot, they look to what other resources are available. All curriculum is being reevaluated; work is being done to ensure alignment, have identified essential standards, report cards can adequately report out on the learning that is taking place whether in person or remote. A lot of that is looking at the students, some of whom experienced a lot of different things while in remote learning, from a trauma perspective. Some of it is that socialization and finding that safe place again.

Assistant Superintendent Thompson commented students who are remote learners for the academic day are not precluded from participation in after-school activities, clubs, and/or any kind of social event the school may try to arrange. The District would look for deliberate opportunities for that socialization to continue to happen.

Member Roy stated her category to be health and safety. There have been a great many questions and opinions shared around the issue of masks; some wondering if they could possibly be enrolling their child into a face covering required classroom. She suggested “facial covering” be more clearly defined.

Questions were posed of the protocol following a positive test/exposure. Member Roy noted the State will be offering guidelines on this. There are many families who have students in multiple schools. The question was asked of what the protocol would be if the elementary school student were exposed, e.g., would the HUES student and middle school student both be treated as exposed, and what the repercussions would be. How far out does the contact tracing go before being viewed as not a risk for exposure.

Superintendent Corey stated contact tracing is done now. With whooping cough and other things, there are requirements that are State mandated. When the nurse contacts him, he has to then contact the State, which provides the guidelines that have to be followed. Typically the starting place is the family unit. There are times when even in the home the child can be isolated so that all of the children do not have to be kept from attending school. From there they move out to who sits near or adjacent to that child, and then continues to move out. Many times he looks to the conversation with the nurse for guidance as health and wellness is not his area of expertise.

Member Roy spoke of questions related to specials. When in remote, they were done on an individual’s own time. When looking to having specials in the specific classroom, how will that occur with physical education?

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug responded it would depend on the activity; stretching and yoga could take place in the classroom, they will look to utilize the outdoors whenever possible.

Member Roy questioned how fire or active shooter drills would work. Assistant Superintendent Thompson spoke of the 7 responses of emergency management and the intent to continue to practice those drills. They would utilize social distancing and masks. The reality is if there were a situation that resulted in having to initiate one of the 7 responses, they are not going to be able to social distance. They would put the health and safety of the students in terms of that emergency situation at the forefront, and that could come at the expense of some of the other mitigating factors for COVID. When they practice the drills they will do everything they can to modify them in a way that will allow for proper social distancing and other mitigating factors.

Member Kellner stated her category to be that of instruction. Most of the comments were related to remote learning. She touched on the importance of providing parents a detailed plan of how it will differ from what it looked like in the spring. There was a call for increased direct instruction and potentially allowing remote students to participate virtually in the classroom where their peers are in person, if possible. Questioned was how staff will handle both remote learning and in-person teaching; will certain staff be assigned to remote students and others to in-person, etc.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated that to still be in discussion. The Administration is in lengthy discussions with union leadership. The proposal is that for K-6 there will be teachers who are remote and students who are remote and teachers who are in person and students who are in person. The big puzzle piece is in how that all plays out in terms of numbers. However, that specialist teacher, if doing an art lesson, a proposal being discussed is turning on the Zoom for the art lesson that is taking place inside a classroom with all assignments being posted to Google Classroom.

Member Roy questioned at what point in August a family has to identify how they will start the year. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug responded typically by now you would have already received an email with a back to school registration form. That was intentionally held until all of this information could be presented. The goal is to push that out on August 1st. The boards, hopefully, at that point will have already come to a decision as to

the plan the District will move forward with. Questions will be added to the sign up specific to the selection of remote or in person and transportation or parent drop-off and pick-up.

Chairman Mann questioned the level of flexibility families are being given to change their initial declaration of remote or in person. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug responded there will be a time when students need to flex. If there is a student that is in person but requires quarantining for 14 days, we cannot say you have no school for 14 days. We need to put them in a remote learning environment, at a minimum, for those 14 days. Every situation will have to be reviewed individually so that the circumstances can be understood. As you can imagine with class size advisory policy, we cannot all of a sudden have 100 students flex to remote and overload those teachers. It is a balancing act. Asked if there will be an escalation process in place if parents cannot work this out with the Administration and wish to bring the matter before the Board, she stated the first person would be the building Principal, after which it would be the Superintendent, and then the Board.

Member Arthur asked for clarification, under the current plan, if a student flexed out to remote learning, they would then be assigned to a different teacher, and was told that is correct for the elementary schools.

Member Roy asked for clarification for those families choosing to send their children in person, will they be required (staff and students) to take a COVID test before coming to school on September 3rd? Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug responded not unless the State directs us to; we cannot ask that.

Vice Chairman Fareed noted her category to be facilities and human resources. The question asked most frequently relates to whether parents will be asked to supply cleaning products in any particular volume more than they are accustomed to being asked for. The response was no, the Business Administrator has already been stockpiling.

With regard to bathrooms, students often use the facilities in groups. Is there a plan for managing that to maintain social distancing guidelines and ensure hands are being washed without interfering with student privacy? The response was that it would vary by grade level; however, yes, when you are in the hallway the plan states you will be wearing a mask. Restrictions are being implemented on how close you may stand to wait for the restroom; therefore, we would have to restrict the number of people in the restroom at any one time. It is being stated hands must be washed upon exiting the restroom.

Vice Chairman Fareed stated concerns about the facility air handling were for another day as there are two separate committees working very actively on that topic.

She questioned outside use of the facilities, e.g., will classrooms be used by outside groups such as Destination Imagination, Legos, etc. The response was that the recommendation, at this time, is limiting. There is a little flexibility as currently the Brookline summer program is being run (before and after school). A similar program in the Hollis schools is proposing to run. The Administration is stating there can be access to the particular spaces. Beyond that, it is up to the Superintendent to approve use of the facility, which would be on a case-by-case basis looking at the location, number of students, etc.

Vice Chairman Fareed brought forward the question of are teachers prepared to return to work under the conditions outlined. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug remarked just as with our families, there is a wide range of comfort level in returning to school. Some 100% want to return and some 100% are nervous about returning. There is a wide spectrum.

Numerous people have asked if we will have adequate numbers of substitute teachers in the event of absences for the myriad of reasons our staff have to be absent. Superintendent Corey stated the SAU will do its absolute best to attract substitutes, but to give a false impression that people would be willing to come in may not be

realistic. The COOP School Board has approached him about looking at the substitute pay. That may be looked at in August. That will be difficult.

Vice Chairman Fareed questioned if there is a plan for dealing with staff shortages on those occasions when too many adults are missing from the building for the typical distribution of students for whatever the plan turns out to be. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated this is something the SAU runs into every year. This year will be a little different. In a situation like this, if we have a number of staff members out due to a quarantine situation, that might inform our decision to pivot.

The last question that appeared multiples times is if enough consideration has been given to using approved volunteers to assist with things like hand washing, hallway monitoring, etc. Superintendent Corey remarked the plan states we will have a process whereby if there is a critical need we will be accepting volunteers. For example, if assistance were required with food service, there is a core group that has been with the SAU for many many years that would be looked to first. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug remarked if help is needed with washing of hands, food service distribution, that is more of a critical need, but reading a book to the class can be done electronically. Volunteers can still participate in such a way.

Chairman Mann had the category of general questions and concerns. The one question that has come forward time and time again is around the importance of understanding what would drive the decision to pivot, and the processes of evaluating risk in that period at which we do it. He remarked the spirit of those questions appears to be that it would be beneficial to put something in the Plan providing an idea of how risk will be evaluated, and the decision made of a model change. Assistant Superintendent Thompson stated the three models have been developed and the next step is continuity of operations planning, which is the ability to identify criteria that allows for seamlessly moving through various operational phases. That would include developing baseline data that would say we have reached this number of cases in our community or this metric, and now we need to be able to switch. Now that we have the three models in place we will move into the phase of continuity of operations planning that will allow us to do exactly what is being asked.

Member Roy commented she believes the key for the families in Hollis is as much notice as possible that there will be a change especially for those folks who will be utilizing the in-person model.

Member Arthur read from the American Association of Superintendents recommendations. Recommendation #10 – “Embrace A New Paradigm For Public Education - Task force superintendents reinforced that educators would benefit from viewing the COVID-19 crisis as a breakthrough opportunity to transform schools and education as we know them. The crisis has reinforced long-standing inequities and imbalances within the United States extending from racial, ethnic, cultural, and geographic divides. The lessons we have learned during the pandemic can lead us to a new way of ensuring the achievement of all learners while emphasizing their physical development, health issues, as well as their social-emotional learning progress.”

She remarked, the plan thus far is great on logistics, but she would like to see more on how both remote and in person will, in the dual pandemic world we are now in, address the whole child.

In the past, she has worried about sedentary issues surrounding American life, and is concerned while necessary, the separations will further exacerbate that problem. She questioned if there are creative solutions to address this. With the plan for students to walk directly to their assigned desk and stay at their desk, we are limiting student movement by bringing specials into the classrooms, etc. She questioned how we can still have students moving while keeping them apart.

Assistant Superintendent Thompson commented one of the things outlined in the guidance is it is appropriate to move student instruction outdoors. He can see being able to address the concern through outdoor instruction that would allow students to engage in physical activity.

Member Arthur questioned if there are things being done to the facilities to promote the outdoor time, and was told that is not occurring at this time. A lot of the resources being deployed in terms of the facilities are looking at structural things within the building. Member Arthur spoke of an email she received with the suggestion of purchasing tents/shade devices.

Member Roy spoke of a concern around the burden, financial and otherwise, placed on parents and potentially staff to constantly obtain doctor clearance to return to school. The question posed was will the requirement inadvertently cause families to send sick children to school in lieu of taking the time or money to get a doctor's note. Assistant Superintendent Thompson stated there to be two measures a family can exercise when their child is returning from illness; get documentation from a pediatrician or that the child comes in and receives a screening in the nurse's office prior to their return.

Member Kellner questioned if the report on the HVAC will be provided to parents and if it is anticipated there will be recommendations that will be able to be implemented prior to the start of school on September 3rd. Superintendent Corey remarked in the Hollis district many of the things are being done as a byproduct of HSMART. In the other 4 buildings we will have to wait and see. He feels confident we will be able to turn up the air flow, circulate air, etc. When you are dealing with older buildings sometimes the unexpected occurs. It is hoped the report will be available in early August so that decisions can be made. If it is learned, for example, that a room has terrible ventilation, it would be taken out of the sequence. We will know that with some time to do some work. With items that are pressing we will need to see if we have that capability in the budget or if it is something that can be put into the budget for the next school year.

Vice Chairman Fareed stated a personal concern relative to the issues raised by many around there being asymptomatic transmission, the testing system having false positives/negatives, parents who feel because they are first responders, etc., that they have to send their kids to schools even though perhaps they shouldn't, etc. While the plan has been so well thought through and has exit strategies for a number of shifts in the event things become known, in the time period before they are known, a lot goes on. Currently, New Hampshire is in a very enviable state of affairs regarding COVID. She is concerned about how we know when things are changing before we start seeing sick children, staff, members of the community. For example, if there is an outbreak in the community outside of a school family, and it begins to spread, still not in our buildings, are we going to use that as a trigger point for going into full remote learning or some other modification? She spoke of trusting the incredibly skilled school nurses and staff completely. The DOE, DHHS, etc., are on it, but this virus, in terms of our knowledge, is just full of holes.

Assistant Superintendent Thompson remarked a lot of what is asked was addressed today during the conference call with the DHHS. He stated it to be a work in progress; right now being able to tell you exactly what those metrics are, we cannot. However, moving forward, prior to the start of school, we would be able to give you an indication of the metrics that would be looked at. A lot of the planning that has been done to this point and the recommendation being made, is based currently on zero active cases in Hollis and Brookline. The DHHS is working very closely with schools and is looking to have a system implemented. Again, it will be a recommendation. Thus far, if you go through the plan, most of the recommendations that have been asked of the schools we have done. That data is forthcoming.

Vice Chairman Fareed questioned if there is a way the District could have tests available that could be administered for instances where the school nurse is concerned there is a case. Assistant Superintendent Thompson responded earlier in the day the DHHS indicated the State does not have the resources or capacity to

have onsite testing done at schools. Should schools need assistance when they identify students that may be suspected of having COVID they would connect them with community resources to be able to get them in quickly to be tested and would try to expedite test results. There are limited resources in our State, but the agencies do a very good job of informing where they are able to support us and where they are not.

Chairman Mann stated his expectation there will be another meeting later in July related to this Plan. At that point, Board action will be sought. He noted page 4 of the Plan and bullets 5, 6, and 7. He has heard from a lot of families that they are getting hung up on the fact the SAU is strongly recommending face covering for Pre-K-3, but not requiring it. The next statement indicates all students will wear a face-covering when riding the bus, entering/exiting the building, etc. The same challenges are with Pre-K-3 wearing masks as you will have with students riding the bus. He requested bullet 5 be looked at for the next draft, and perhaps rephrased. He also has an issue with requirements. It looks great on paper, but is different in practice as there will be all kinds of exceptions. He would like to set expectations without contradicting ourselves by saying we strongly recommend it, but it is not required.

He spoke of concern with mask wearing fatigue. He is happy to hear there will be moments to take a break. He questioned if students out on recess would be required to wear face coverings. He would like to see as much relief as possible believing that would result in better compliance.

Assistant Superintendent Thompson noted the language relative to PreK-3 was something that generated a great deal of debate and disagreement by the community group made up of physicians and mental health providers. The language came from the release of the Massachusetts plan earlier in the month. It is definitely something that will be reviewed knowing that we do have populations of students with disabilities, and other physical ailments that will not be able to wear a mask. There is some general concern about younger students. The suggestion was that the words "but not required" could be replaced with "in the classroom".

Chairman Mann questioned if items such as event tents may be needed to support the outdoor activities. He questioned the funding requirements to enable the Plan to be as easily adhered to as possible, e.g., are there lanyards that can be provided the youngest students to help them keep track of/hold onto their masks, etc.

Member Arthur questioned if the Board would consider additional ways for public input in advance of the next meeting. Superintendent Corey remarked he has never found the public to be unable or unwilling to reach out and provide input. He spoke of the fact that the presentation will be provided to the Brookline School Board the following evening and the COOP School Board the night after, which will provide residents of Hollis and Brookline 3 opportunities to participate in a meeting, the meetings are recorded and placed online, the presentation will be posted to the website, etc. The draft plan will also be presented to the Hollis Brookline Rotary (Zoom meeting).

Chairman Mann recognized the work done by the Administration and working groups, and stated his appreciation.

- Community Resolution on Racism

Superintendent Corey spoke of recent events across the country related to racism, tolerance, and inclusion. A community group produced and forwarded to him a draft resolution. That document came in right around the time of the SAU 41 Governing Board meeting. He provided an overview so that members were aware this resolution would be coming forward. Since that time, he has spoken with the Chairs of the three district boards relative to next steps. They each indicated the desire for the resolution to be reviewed using the same procedure used for policy review/adoption, e.g., reviewed over the course of multiple meetings to ensure ample opportunity for public input/awareness. Typically the boards try to avoid acting on major items over the summer months as large portions of the communities are away. The Resolution reads as follows:

Hollis-Brookline Non-discrimination and Equity Initiative

WHEREAS The American Academy of Pediatrics and the [American Academy of Family Physicians](#) declares that institutionalized racism is a public health crisis;

WHEREAS Adverse Childhood Events are known causes of limited educational development amongst children;

WHEREAS The effects of structuralized racism is a known [Adverse Childhood Event](#);

WHEREAS The [National School Board Association](#) states "We affirm in our actions that each student can, will, and shall learn. We recognize that based on factors including but not limited to disability, race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status, students are deprived of equitable educational opportunities. Educational equity is the intentional allocation of resources, instruction, and opportunities according to need, requiring that discriminatory practices, prejudices, and beliefs be identified and eradicated."

WHEREAS The district is committed to nondiscrimination;

WHEREAS Hollis-Brookline is an inclusive community;

WHEREAS The district recognizes that issues of race, equity and inclusion affect all members of the Hollis-Brookline community regardless of their background;

WHEREAS [Racial justice](#) is the systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all.

WHEREAS Policy does not currently exist that explicitly addresses equity, diversity and inclusion.

NOW THEREFORE, may it be resolved that:

1. The SAU #41 school districts will make anti-racism and equity a strategic priority and denounce all forms of institutionalized racism by supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.
2. SAU #41 will render services from an outside consultant, approved by the boards, to evaluate and advise district administration and educators on their policies, practices, and procedures relative to race equity and inclusion.

3. Based on the consultation recommendations, the SAU #41 school districts will develop and release a plan to address the findings. These actions may include professional development, draft new or edit existing policies and procedures, and curriculum review etc.

Superintendent Corey remarked his efforts have been focused on the reopening, but he did reach out to the Anti-Defamation League in Boston and they sent a proposal, which is more of what he would refer to as a document used to self-guide your district through a process. There is a firm having a representative in Manchester that has done this work for Yale University and a number of different organizations. He spoke at the Superintendents' conference, brought many points to the table. Superintendent Corey reached out to the representative requesting a proposal, which has been provided.

The Resolution was not placed on the agenda as an action item as it is believed to be another issue that will generate a good deal of public input. He would like to ensure there is ample time for residents to be informed of the resolution and provide guidance.

Chairman Mann spoke of this being a conversation that has to be nurtured and expanded over time. He would like to obtain as much public input as possible. That was the impetus behind the desire to put the resolution through the same procedure as is used for policy. Understanding the need for a resolution to transfer into some sort of action, he suggested identification of any gaps that may exist in terms of policy, professional development, achieving expertise advisement, etc.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Marie Ramas, 9 Colburn Lane

Remarked she has shared her vantagepoint as a woman who grew up in New Hampshire, a minority mother that grew up in New Hampshire, a medical professional that has been on multiple platforms and helped equity and inclusion issues around the country, but first and foremost tonight she is coming to the Board as a mother who moved to Hollis Brookline four years ago because of this district's outstanding history and to its credit collegiality and professionalism. She thanked the Board for its insightfulness taking on these unprecedented times we are living in and being nimble, taking as much information as possible to create evidence-based and best practices that will benefit our children. She submitted that this resolution is once again going to set a precedent for other school districts in the State. Hollis-Brookline is committed to creating leaders, which is why her family moved here. They are a family committed to creating future leaders and the best citizens possible.

Efforts of diversity, equity, and inclusion is not political. It is necessary. It is historical. It is science. We cannot deny our history as Americans and the discrepancies and disparities that we all have in school systems.

This resolution is not talking about doing anything without the guidance of community members. What it is saying is that you will set it as a priority. We are in a situation where we need to make changes, where our school district has to be relevant to the needs and concerns and acute necessities that our families have to maneuver within this unprecedented time. We are in a time in our nation's history where we are facing the very open truth of our nation's founding on white supremacy. That is uncomfortable. We do not have all the answers, but we are going to be committed to help our students and our families know how to talk about these hard topics. It is not easy to make assumptions that someone is capable or incapable of one thing or another based on the color of their skin, but those are the implicit biases that we have. The resolution is not about setting an agenda, it is about giving our families the tools we need to have thoughtful conversations one way or the other regarding race, equity, and inclusion. Our kids will be in your seats making these very important decisions, and we want to set that example for the State on how to do it right.

Joe Garruba, 28 Winchester Drive

Questioned the authors of the resolution, and was informed it was created by a number of community members. He noted the information from the Anti-Defamation League was not provided to the public with the agenda. Superintendent Corey explained he reached out to them and asked what they had for programming to assist schools moving forward on the issue of inclusion and tolerance. They provided him with information he has been reviewing. Asked if that could be made available, he indicated it could; however, noted he is uncertain he will recommend utilizing it.

Mr. Garruba questioned if there was additional information received from other sources. Superintendent Corey remarked when reaching out to the Anti-Defamation League, he reached out to an individual who spoke on diversity and inclusion at the New Hampshire Superintendents' Conference. Having heard him speak, he reached out to him informing him the SAU is at the beginning stages of looking for resources and questioned if he could send a proposal of what his consulting firm does and their approach to this matter.

Mr. Garruba commented on children losing out on the education critical to their future. The present crisis demands that we focus on providing the education they need. He spoke of appreciation of the efforts of the Board and Administration to meet the challenge of last year. He stated surprise to find the newly proposed non-discrimination policy included in the material for tonight's meeting. Revising the policy cannot be a priority until we are providing quality education for our children. School policies should be the result of a careful process of review and public input. School policies should not be passed on a schedule that is dictated by popular news items or political protests.

The recent racial violence is a terrible concern and has sparked discussions in his family about the need for fairness in dealing with people of all races. It should not be used as justification for short-cutting the policy development process.

The draft non-discrimination resolution proposed has numerous fundamental problems as written. It is written in a legalese, which is unlike any of our other school policies. What are the implications of such language? Has it been reviewed by counsel? Has public outreach been conducted? He requested the Board set the matter aside until we have a handle on the immediate crisis at hand.

Chairman Mann clarified the resolution is not a policy. He requested the Superintendent seek a legal opinion on the differences. He is unaware of the legal impacts of a resolution.

Asked if there would be other opportunities for public comment on the resolution, Chairman Mann indicated the desire to utilize the process that is followed when addressing policy discussion/adoption. The resolution would go through a series of readings/meetings. On each occurrence, public comment will be encouraged, and there exists the opportunity for revision.

Tiffany Testa, 101 Mooar Hill Road

Stated the language of the resolution is based on the fact that it is a resolution, which are spoken in a particular way.

Equity and education are not separate; they are the only thing. The resolution simply identifies the need for conversation. We need to act now and move forward because there is such a thing as being too late to this conversation in terms of getting our kids ready to come back. She has worked in education for over 20 years, is extremely experienced in equitable education and in educational reform. We are a white community that will build the powerful people that make the decisions that affect our entire nation. We have to teach our kids about this work.

Race, racism, and anti-racism is the work of all of us, not just those that have it in their school district. We all know from the day-to-day work that it does come across in our district and our kids do get the messages. Those conversations are important. This resolution is about starting that work.

She urged the Board and Administration to support action that happens before we return. Our students are returning from a pandemic and from a real clear equitable issue in our nation in social justice. If we do not do the work to figure out how to support teachers and students in those conversations then we have not gotten them ready to come back to school. This work is all tied into social and emotional learning. We do not know the experiences our students have, but we have to start getting our curriculum and work around equity engrained into our school.

She spoke of having full confidence in the District around the safety and curriculum aspects of returning to school.

Susan Homola, 15 Mendelssohn Drive

Stated appreciation for the conversation. She commented on her impression that the Hollis-Brookline staff is competent, kind, compassionate, and have always taught the students to be such. The Student-Parent Handbook addresses student behavior and kindness. There is also a new policy on bullying and anti-violence. She believes the school has been very proactive about that. The conversations of kindness have always happened. Even given everything that is happening in communities outside of Hollis, that does not change the fact that Hollis teachers are going to go back with the same competencies and professionalisms and teaching the students in the same way.

She commented when she was 13 her Mom moved her from Massachusetts to inner-city Phoenix, and she was able to have the great experience of being someone who did not look like anyone else in her school. The one takeaway she got from that was that it always came down to kindness. It was a very hard experience for her, but it wasn't because she was the only person who looked like her, it was because it was riddled with gang violence and drugs. It is because of those reasons she has spent her adult life seeking out school districts that can give her children the life she did not get to have, and so that they are safe.

She came to Hollis because of the school. She loves the kindness of the teachers, feels this SAU has been talking about inclusivity for a long time, and these are things that are already being done. She feels, at this point, it somewhat takes away from the business at hand of opening up the school. She believes it a great conversation to have, but to everyone's point, she would say we have already been having it.

She remarked we have trusted the competency and professionalism of our staff, and questioned if there is a reason we cannot trust them now. She stated concern with brining in an outside agency as she believes we can have those conversations. If someone had an issue in the school, the student handbook is very clear about the levels of address that can be taken. On our staff we have mental health professionals that can handle acute issues that might come up.

Chairman Mann responded to the question stating given the situation nationally, it is a good conversation to provide some reflection on how we are doing as an organization. He believes the SAU does a pretty darn good

job, but he wants to ask the right questions to verify that. There is nothing wrong with reviewing/revising policies in light of changes whether local or national.

Ms. Homola commented the concern some have is in trusting the motives of some of these outside organizations. She requested if an outside agency is brought in to look at policy that parents are given the opportunity to vet that outside agency.

Pam Hicks, 8 Maple Knoll Drive

Stated her belief this is not the time to look at this. We have a country that is torn apart, kids that are fighting through social media, and it is pitting our kids against one another. We have a discrimination policy. If it is not working well, it needs to be looked at and changed appropriately. This district has done a great job. We have inclusion and acceptance. If you want to develop a policy like this, it should be done internally, but not now. Everyone is in such upheaval. We do have a predominantly white population here, and that resolution defines you as a racist if anything you do has an unjust outcome. Our kids do not need to hear this. Her daughter recently said you know what, I never used to see color, ever. But because of all of what is going on, I am seeing it now. She does not like that. This is being shoved down our throats. It is a political agenda. This is not the time to do this. She urged the district to review the curriculum and at the history that is being taught so that the full scope of history is being taught to all of our students so that everyone can make informed decisions with all of the facts. This is going to tear our kids apart. She remarked, as leaders, you have the opportunity to speak up and condemn all forms of hatred, etc. These are adult fights and we are putting it on our kids, and making our kids fight. Instead of finding ways to redefine racism, find ways of tolerance and getting along instead of you deserve this because you are that color and you deserve this because you are this color. That is the stuff that has got to stop. You all, by this resolution, are encouraging that to further divide our community and in fact the whole country.

Andrew Scott, 167 Proctor Hill Road

Remarked the Hollis-Brookline Non-Discrimination and Equity Initiative states that SAU 41 school districts will make anti-racism and equity a strategic priority and denounce all forms of institutionalized racism by supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. To implement this process, the proposal states that SAU 41 will render services from an outside consultant who will evaluate and advise the district and make recommendations to draft new or edit existing policies and update curriculum, etc.

He does not support using taxpayer money to bring in outside consultants. The voters in this community just gave our teachers and administration significant financial raises because we have confidence that you can do your job and do it well. You know our community and members of our community.

This is already happening organically. His daughter is a rising college senior who graduated from HB. She told him she is Facebook friends with a number of former teachers and in their online discussion they have talked about how they are adjusting their courses to address many of the issues of the day. For example, the U.S. Literature Curriculum teacher asked for community recommendations on BIPOC and LGBTQ literature to update curriculum. In addition, the official HBHS library account has been posting "In an attempt to refocus my history lens and fill some knowledge and understanding gaps, I joined other librarians dedicated to challenging our existing ideas and understanding on racism, sexism, ageism, equality, and being a better human. I have realized some tough to acknowledge stuff from some easy to embrace people. So much respect for my colleagues across the country. We've got stuff to learn each day in every way, and that is okay."

Mr. Scott remarked we do not need outside consultants. Our teachers are doing their jobs, and do not need to be told what to teach or how to teach from outside consultants. He stated appreciation for other speakers and the Chairman who indicated the desire to make this a process.

The proposal uses the words racism or anti-racism 5 times, inclusion 5 times, equity or equitable 8 times. There was a time when all of us had a pretty good idea of what those terms meant. For example, if you ask most Americans today what it means to be anti-racist, they will probably say something akin to ideals espoused by Martin Luther King; that we are to be judged by the content of our character not the color of our skin. Anti-racist used to mean to be against people who judge by race. That is not the definition in our culture today. In our culture of social justice via critical race theory is driving the cultural narrative. Critical race theory has very specific meanings to these words, which are not the same as what you might currently think. Before voting on this initiative, he requested the Board see how the words are defined in our current cultural narrative and the implications behind those definitions.

A website that aims to be non-political while using primary sources from leading critical race theories and organizations to accurately define what they mean by these terms and then comment on those definitions can be found at www.newdiscourses.com. He stated a willingness to do the research work and send the content to the Board.

The proposal states that educational equity is the intentional allocation of resources, instruction, and opportunities according to need requiring that discriminatory practices, prejudices, and beliefs be identified and eradicated. This proposal states we will identify and eradicate discriminatory practices. We all agree to that. That is the law of our land. A practice is a thing created by human beings that we can identify and indeed eradicate. But prejudices and beliefs are not things created by human beings. Beliefs are held by human beings. Are we saying that as a district we are going to identify prejudices and beliefs and then eradicate children who hold those beliefs? How do you eradicate a belief in a child once it is identified? Are we going to shame them, isolate them? That word really needs to be defined. He spoke of being surprised that was a quote from the National School Board Association.

He does not believe there is the need for outside consultants. Any outside consultant will be well versed in social justice and critical race theory. Before voting on a proposal like this, please research what these terms means within the context of critical race theory because if it does get passed, eventually, that is how it is going to be understood.

Member Roy questioned if the mention of a consultant was intended to reference a paid consultant and/or other outside sources that could be sought out to provide information or guidance. Mr. Scott responded he was primarily speaking to paid consultants from outside of the community. Most of those paid consultants have no idea what our community is about.

Mark Ledoux, 64 Dow Road

Congratulated the Board and Administration for dealing with very difficult topics, and for hearing the concerns of the community and educators, and understanding that their role is to educate the next generation of leaders in our community.

A lot has been talked about as it relates to the issue of equity and fairness. As the Chairman of the Selectboard, he has to weigh a lot of things that fall into a very grey area of consideration. Then they have to seek consensus just as the framers of the Constitution of the United States had to do this, just as the framers of the Bill of Rights in New Hampshire did. He generally finds it most instructive when struggling with something that is temporal, timely, and needs the filter of a lens of history that is not modified by the current state of affairs. It is what it is, the words are what they are. The meanings may be nuanced. He read into the record the following statement that was written many years ago inserting the term women behind the word men because when the document was written women were not considered of equal voting value as men:

All men and women are born equally free and independent; Therefore, all government of right originates from the people, is founded in consent, and instituted for the general good.

All men and women have certain natural, essential, and inherent rights among which are, the enjoying and defending life and liberty; acquiring, possessing, and protecting, property; and, in a word, of seeking and obtaining happiness. Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by this state on account of race, creed, color, sex or national origin.

This was adopted on June 2, 1784 during the adoption of the Bill of Rights to the New Hampshire Constitution. It provides a good guiding set of principles as you struggle with these issues, which are very nuance and time sensitive and are driven by the events of today in the media as well as our own consciences who have seen the anguish and angst that people have endured at the hands of injustice. Our charter is to bring equity, intelligence, wisdom, and compassion to this discussion. The District and the Town have good sets of policies dealing with issues of discrimination, concerns about equity, etc.

David Werner, 148 Ridge Road, Hollis

Moved to Town 3 years ago. Although he does not have any children in the district, as a taxpayer, he chose to become familiar with the district. He did, and found it to be one of the top. He is bewildered by seeing the resolution and issue. In his professional life, he was a trial attorney in California. One of the main lawsuits he would bring were on behalf of people who identified as black or brown or Asian who claimed racism. He would sue school boards on behalf of kids who were mistreated. He sued city governments. The reason he brought it up is racism is evil, it is a sin, and needs to be stomped out. There is no dispute in his mind about that and that it is an urgent issue. He had many cases where he would sue a school board who had experts, and that was their defense. He got multi-million dollar verdicts against that school board because in the final analysis he convinced the jury that to hire an outsider was to take their responsibility and transfer it to somebody else and then use that as an excuse for not doing their own job. You cannot turn over this issue to somebody who does not know this school, does not know your kids, etc. It is a way of saying oh I have taken care of the problem; I have transferred that issue from my shoulders to somebody else. Why would you want to bring another's values into this scenario? What is wrong with you saying I am going to take charge and go after this issue because I have the talent, the ability, and most importantly I love these kids? What expert out there can stand there and say I love these kids; I want to do the right thing? Those people are right here.

This is an urgent issue and you cannot wait three years while an expert charges you a few million dollars to tell you what the facts of life are. It is now. He spoke of Isabelle and the need for her to know that action is being taken right now on her behalf. When he would put on a case the people he would call were the mom, dad, kid, neighbors, etc. because they know what is going on. The place to start is with the people that are standing up saying I feel like I am not welcome here.

Everybody he has met in this Town is so welcoming, loving, and caring. Why is there somebody in our midst who says I do not feel welcome? Why not just go ask them? Why hire an expert to stand between you and that student? He asked the Board to consider it urgent, take responsibility, not pass it off on somebody that doesn't care about the students and only cares about doing the tap dance they do as an expert. Do not ask them to come in here and do your job and impose their values on your students.

Vice Chairman Fareed spoke of the various checks and balances that exist within the practices of the SAU whether that be in regard to accounting procedures, etc. Within a 92% white state and perhaps a higher percentage white town, we do not have the internal knowledge to know if our best effort is you do not know what you do not know. Although not arguing in favor of the resolution, as written, she noted the point has been made by so many, and it is important to note, none of us can walk in the shoes of a person of color who sees reflexively assumed material in the curriculum, a reflexive use of certain language or certain presumptions. We cannot see those things. We do not hear them. There is a role for someone who does not look like us and has not lived our life informing us. But if that is all we ever did, of course, that would be an absolute morale failure.

Members of the Board expressed the desire to be provided with the legal opinion on the distinction between a resolution and policy before any Board action is taken.

Member Roy remarked the outside consultant aspect of the resolution needs to be more specific, e.g., paid or not. Our District has an incredible track record of having subject matter experts within the HB community and the Superintendent community. She hesitates to put dollars behind this agreeing with previous speakers around the idea of taking guidance from someone outside of our fairly unique community. In addition, is the need for a glossary of definitions. One of the actions outlined in the resolution is "Based on the consultation recommendations, the SAU #41 school districts will develop and release a plan to address the findings. These actions may include professional development, draft new or edit existing policies and procedures, and curriculum review etc.". If we can edit existing policy and procedure to capture this and make it something we are involving our teachers in doing she would find optimal.

Member Arthur spoke of being involved with the drafting of the resolution, which came about through a lot of listening during her time in the community; is not a response to national events. It is being considered during a critical time in history for all of our students. They will all be better citizens of our future world when we focus on embedding equity and informed conversations about race into our schools.

She is hopeful this can evolve into something the Board and public can get behind because it makes all of us better when we embrace equity and justice for race and all differences within our community.

DELIBERATIONS

- To see what action the Board will take regarding Authorizing the Board Chair to sign the Federal General Assurances

A copy of the General Assurances was included as part of the [agenda](#) packet.

The documentation the Chairperson is required to sign acknowledges the Board is aware of acceptance/receipt of federal funding and the obligations associated with that acceptance, e.g., Title I (not accepted by the District), Title II (teacher professional development), and Title IV (technology focus) as well as the IDEA Grant (special education). The obligations associated with acceptance are reviewed through the Business Office and then by the Auditor. Acknowledgement became a requirement several years ago when it became known that some boards were unaware of the receipt/acceptance of federal dollars and/or the obligations associated with

acceptance.

MOTION BY MEMBER FAREED TO AUTHORIZE THE BOARD CHAIRPERSON TO REPRESENT THE SCHOOL BOARD, AND ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE SUPERINTENDENT HAS CONSULTED WITH ALL MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD, IN FURTHERANCE OF THE SCHOOL BOARD’S OBLIGATIONS, INCLUDING THOSE ENUMERATED IN RSA 189:1-A, AND PURSUANT TO THE SCHOOL BOARD’S OVERSIGHT OF FEDERAL FUNDS THE DISTRICT WILL BE RECEIVING AND OF THE GENERAL ASSURANCES, REQUIREMENTS AND DEFINITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN SAID FEDERAL PROGRAMS

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ROY

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

NON-PUBLIC

MOTION BY MEMBER FAREED THAT THE BOARD GO INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION PURSUANT TO RSA 91-A:3 II (a) THE DISMISSAL, PROMOTION OR COMPENSATION OF ANY PUBLIC EMPLOYEE AND (c) TO DISCUSS A MATTER, WHICH IF DISCUSSED IN PUBLIC, WOULD LIKELY AFFECT ADVERSELY THE REPUTATION OF A PERSON, OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF THE BODY OR AGENCY ITSELF

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ROY

A Viva Voce Roll Call was conducted, which resulted as follows:

Yea: Brooke Arthur, Carryl Roy, Amy Kellner, Tammy Fareed, Robert Mann

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Nay:

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MOTION CARRIED

The Board went into non-public session at 10:08 p.m.

The Board came out of non-public session at 10:15 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY MEMBER FAREED TO ADJOURN

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ROY

MOTION CARRIED

The July 20, 2020 meeting of the Hollis School Board was adjourned at 10:16 p.m.

Date _____

Signed _____