

**HOLLIS SCHOOL BOARD
NOVEMBER 1, 2017
MEETING MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Hollis School Board was conducted on Wednesday, November 1, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. at the Hollis Upper Elementary School.

Chairman Robert Mann presided:

Members of the Board Present: Tammy Fareed, Vice Chairman
Michelle St. John, Secretary (arrived at 6:01 p.m.)
Laurie Miller

Members of the Board Absent: Tom Enright

Also in Attendance: Andrew Corey, Superintendent
Gina Bergskaug, Assistant Superintendent
Kristen Maher, Assistant Business Administrator

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

A request was made to adjust the agenda by moving the math update to the first item under Discussion, and Public Comment to follow the update.

The consensus of the Board was to adjust the agenda as requested.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Hollis School Board October 4, 2017

The following amendment was offered:

Page 20, Line 15; replace “students” with “student”

**MOTION BY MEMBER FAREED TO ACCEPT AS AMENDED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MILLER
MOTION CARRIED
4-0-0**

NOMINATIONS / RESIGNATIONS / CORRESPONDENCE

Superintendent Corey informed the Board Nicolasa Moreau, Grade 4 Teacher, is expecting a child on March 13th. She will return to the District in August of the 2018-2019 school year. He wished her and her husband all the best.

Ms. St. John questioned what occurs when a staff member takes maternity leave mid-year, e.g., is there a long-term substitute brought on. Superintendent Corey stated that to be the case. The position is posted, interviews would be conducted, and candidates would be brought in-house to do a teaching session with the students, which would be observed by the Administration. After a period of ten days, the individual is bumped up to a long-term substitute rate of payment, which is based on qualifications. There have been years where there were retirements at other districts, and those long-term substitutes get considered for permanent positions.

PRINCIPALS' REPORT

The report was provided as part of the [agenda](#) packet. Superintendent Corey commented on the success of the Haunted House and Fun Fair, and thanked the PTA.

Students are making cards to help a local family reach their goal to give holiday cards to an entire Naval Carrier.

He thanked the Brookline Lion's Club who came in to do the eye screening with their iscreen machine.

Superintendent Corey thanked Don McCoy, Director, Emergency Management, Hollis, Chief James Sartell, Hollis Police Department, and Chief William Quigley, III, Brookline Police Department for their support during the recent storm. He spoke of the Emergency Management Team, which began its work late Sunday night and stayed through the day on Monday.

Vice Chairman Fareed stated concern with beginning the math update too far in advance of its publicized start time.

There being no objection, the Board went out of the regular order of business to take up Deliberations, and the updates on transportation and Hollis Schools Thermal Electric Project (HSTEP).

DELIBERATIONS

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the Policy Memo submitted by the Policy Committee

EFAA – School Lunch Meal Payment Policy
Given its third reading;

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated there to have been no proposed changes or feedback since the last reading.

**MOTION BY MEMBER MILLER TO ACCEPT THE THIRD READING AND ADOPT POLICY EFAA - SCHOOL LUNCH MEAL PAYMENT POLICY
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ST. JOHN
MOTION CARRIED
4-0-0**

IHBG – Access to Public School Programs by Nonpublic, Public Chartered Schools or Home Educated Pupils
Given its first reading;

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the policy was driven by a change in the law.

**MOTION BY MEMBER MILLER TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY IHBG – ACCESS TO PUBLIC SCHOOL PROGRAMS BY NONPUBLIC, PUBLIC CHARTERED SCHOOLS OR HOME EDUCATED PUPILS, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ST. JOHN
MOTION CARRIED
4-0-0**

GBEF – School District Internet Access for Staff
Given its first reading;

MOTION BY MEMBER MILLER TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY GBEF – SCHOOL DISTRICT INTERNET ACCESS FOR STAFF, AS PRESENTED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ST. JOHN
MOTION CARRIED
4-0-0

JLCJ – Concussion and Head Injuries
Given its first reading;

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the policy is providing a protocol for when students can return to play or academics. It is a means of trying to guarantee we are keeping students safe.

MOTION BY MEMBER MILLER TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY JLCJ – CONCUSSION AND HEAD INJURIES, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ST. JOHN

ON THE QUESTION

Chairman Mann questioned, and was informed the policy applies whether a concussion occurred during or outside of the school day/activity.

MOTION CARRIED
4-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the approval of the budget/Annual Meeting calendar

Superintendent Corey stated the Business Administrator has worked with the District's legal counsel and has checked with the Budget and Finance Committees as well as the three School Boards in terms of schedules. What is being proposed for the Hollis School District is a Public Hearing on February 6th with a snow date of February 13th and the District Annual Meeting on March 6th with a snow date of March 8th. The intent would be to schedule a School Board meeting for March for the specific purpose of reorganization.

Chairman Mann commented on the schedule the Negotiations Team will have to follow. The Budget Committee wishes to receive the final language in advance of the Public Hearing.

MOTION BY MEMBER FAREED TO APPROVE THE SCHEDULE FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING AS RECOMMENDED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MILLER
MOTION CARRIED
4-0-0

- Transportation Update

Superintendent Corey stated the SAU Board met late last month, voted to consult with legal counsel regarding contract language, and empowered the three District Board Chairs to be the resource to those discussions. Since that time, he has reached out to legal counsel and the transportation company. They are working towards identifying a meeting date for the following week after which, the Board Chairs will be provided an update, and legal counsel will advise on next steps.

The situation has improved somewhat primarily because of athletic runs; decreased them and reached out to outside vendors, which resulted in being able to secure a limited amount of drivers/buses. The sports season is now down to two teams; Girls Volleyball who will be playing in the State Championship this Saturday night and Boys Football who will be playing the first-round tournament game this Saturday.

The transportation company has 3 drivers in training, and 3 additional applications. Superintendent Corey spoke of how helpful the transportation company was during the recent storm. Their drivers and dispatchers know our roads and how you can get around a downed tree, etc.

Ms. Miller commented her daughter is on the cross-country team at the High School, and she was really pleased to see that for one of the meets they coordinated with another school in the area and shared their buses for a long trip. She suggested doing more of that would help the situation.

Chairman Mann commented on the discussion that occurred at the recent SAU41 Governing Board meeting stating his opinion collectively the Districts came up with some steps the Superintendent was directed to take. The Board requested the Superintendent provide an update at the individual district boards.

When asked when the new drivers are expected to be onboard, Superintendent Corey responded it is kind of a roll of the dice. There was one driver that went up to Concord, and did not pass the test, which results in an automatic 10-day wait before being able to take the test again. Superintendents have reached out to both the Commissioner of Education and Legislators requesting the process be streamlined. Many of the rules and regulations that have been put in place have made it very difficult on transportation companies.

Ms. St. John stated a desire for the Board to be kept informed of the process and any changes that take place. Superintendent Corey stated what is being looked at are scenarios such as the 10-day waiting period to retake the test.

Vice Chairman Fareed commented at the SAU41 Governing Board meeting, the alternative approaches that were brought forward as suggestions at the last HSB meeting were discussed. She questioned if any further discussion has occurred around those suggestions. Superintendent Corey stated some of the points brought up at the prior meeting such as combining runs on a permanent basis were considered. However, placing that many students on a single bus would result in a certain portion of those students always arriving home late in the day. With the end of daylight savings time fast approaching, there won't be much time between students getting off the bus and pitch darkness.

Vice Chairman Fareed suggested if the new drivers fail to materialize or even on one route, and that route continues to have unpredictable long runs, it would be better if it were a predictable long run, which was something she heard when the public spoke to the Board at its last meeting. She suggested there be a Plan B where should it be known there will be another long gap, that there be an alternative route that would be put into place for some period.

Ms. Miller suggested a compromise could be if it was known at the start of a week that the transportation company would be short a driver for a full week that at the start of the week an alert is provided for the entirety of the week. Superintendent Corey stated, now, without athletic runs, unless someone calls in sick, we are fully staffed. There are no substitutes.

- Update on the Hollis Schools Thermal Electric Project (HSTEP)

Superintendent Corey stated there to be a delivery date for the transformer (November 8th). The delay was the result of the liability form that was sent to the SAU not meeting the requirements, which meant the delivery could not be accepted. They could not have people working on that without being covered.

The next step is hallway lighting; move to LEDs, which is scheduled for December.

Two architectural firms were interviewed for the wrapping of HPS and the items related to heat source air pumps, etc. Once a final agreement is reached, the name of the firm will be identified.

Vice Chairman Fareed questioned when inspection of the HUES solar photovoltaic (PV) system will occur.

- Mathematics Update

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug remarked the presentation covers work she has been doing over the past 15 months; what has occurred and what is planned. She stated no quality change process takes place

overnight, it is something that many people are a part of. It is important that the SAU switch over to looking at a K-12 approach.

Previously, math existed as 4 separate entities. As a result, communication did not occur between districts or buildings. Curricular resources were varied even within a district.

The goal was to move the district forward to logical progressions through a vertically aligned curriculum. The objectives were to review alignment to ensure logical progression, align the math manipulatives, resources, and materials, identify strengths, needs, and concerns, recommend any appropriate revisions, and recommend and put in place needed professional development. That work began last year by the math Curriculum Committee (Committee). There are members on the Committee from every single building within the SAU.

At the same time, the Standards Based Report Card Committee, which began in 2015, reviewed what a standards based report card is, the goals of having a standardized report card, the standards, and selected appropriate standards for grade levels. Before switching over to a completely new grading system, the committee recommended some Teachers (1 per grade level per building) try it out alongside their traditional grading system.

The SAU has instituted Meaningful Monday. Every Monday afternoon, an entire grade level team within the SAU works together for three hours. They work within teams, have really good conversation about what the practices are, etc. The team can share assessments, activities, strategies, look at the rigor; how do you teach the standards, how do you backfill when you see there is a gap in a specific area, etc. Those conversations have been very rich.

In addition, the pilot group for the standards based report card also gets together once per trimester to focus on the standards. It is important to ensure that Teachers have the same understanding of a standard, e.g., what does it look like for Kindergarten if the standard says they can tell a story with a picture; at what point do we need to require the addition of words, at what point are we expecting the picture to be more anatomically correct if of a person, etc. The committee started collecting and analyzing data beyond just the Professional Learning Community (PLC) groups. They are looking at data from the elementary, sharing it with the middle school, to help grade 7; to say these are the students that are coming to you, this is where they are strong, and these are some areas where there are some gaps.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated she began meeting with Teachers from the algebra courses in the middle and high school (grades 8 and 9) to ensure the rigor is the same, that students leaving an algebra course have all had a very similar experience. The Committee spent a good deal of time over the summer revising the grade 7 math curriculum, revising compacted math curriculum, which is an accelerated grade 7 class, revising grade 8 curriculum, and then revising algebra I curriculum in 8th grade.

A lot of data sharing occurred, which there was no mechanism for previously, e.g., grade 6 students take a math placement test, which was analyzed in grade 7, and the results were not shared. Those results have been detailed and itemized, shared with grade 6, shared with the sending districts, shared with grade 7 Teachers to the point where they are trying to proactively implement adjustments for what the 7th grade students need, what is being done in grade 6, and looking at piloting a new intervention program for 7th and 8th grade students.

The Brookline School District (BSD) implemented enVision 2.0. In Hollis enVision 1.0 is used. That is starting the conversation of the difference between the two and how the Teachers can learn from each other.

In Hollis, the District has been looking at developing a plan to best meet the needs of all learners. Additional math time is provided for some students during Response to Intervention (RtI) for advanced learning at HUES, a K-12 committee is in place to review and outline very clear guidelines and expectations for entrance and exit criteria for acceleration. The District is trying to define the what, when, and the how to accelerate. When students go from one building to the next, it is important that there is a clear understanding upon their arrival, of

what exactly took place with all those learners. Some teachers have showed an interest in enVision 2.0, which could be explored.

Superintendent Bergskaug stated the key to be continuing the conversation, continuing that bi-weekly PLC of algebra Teachers, implementing the revised grade 7 compacted math course, implementing the revised grade 8 algebra course, reflecting upon it, making changes as necessary, piloting the standards based report cards.

There is the need to have conversations with the community part of which is transparency; being transparent about the process, about the process of transitioning a student from grade 6 to grade 7. There is a lot of anxiety when thinking about switching over to a new district and new school.

The desire would be to share exactly what that new plan is in January, before a placement test takes place, before decisions must be made, that defines the criteria for acceleration, the process around math placement, and defines and explains the opportunities available in the summer for students wishing to attend.

Steps for the next year include:

- Identifying key math vocabulary for each course

It is a critical first step to make sure the language is there and that 5th grade knows the language 4th grade is using, 7th grade knows the language 6th grade is using. It is easy for the students to say we never learned that, but it could be just a change in the term used.

- Provide intervention to targeted group at HBMS

Piloting an intervention program to a target group of about 50 students at the middle school to really look at different intervention programs, and compare how students do on a standardized assessment once having had this experience in comparison to the prior year.

- Revise the Math Placement Exam & Procedures

The intent is to move away from a skills-based assessment where a student having been exposed to something having an advantage to more of a mathematical mindset/way of thinking about math. Students having special reasoning and an ability to think logically about math, that is the type of mind that is more prepared for acceleration rather than the student that just has been exposed to certain topics. It is also a test that you would not study for.

- Offer additional options to HBMS students to best meet the needs of all learners

This issue will be discussed further at the November 15th meeting of the COOP School Board as it has budgetary impacts.

- Offer additional and/or refined options to best meet the needs of all learners in Hollis & Brookline

We need to offer a little bit more. Right now, the District is offering a little bit more in the Rtl time or FLEX time during the day. There is the need to identify what it is specifically we are offering, and ensure those processes are aligned between Hollis and Brookline so that we don't create a new gap at a later point.

- Develop a K-12 approach to align vertical acceleration practices

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug reiterated the key is continuing the conversation, based on data, to support our student needs, and the students that we have right now not the students that we had 5-10 years ago.

Vice Chairman Fareed asked for additional information on the remarks made regarding ensuring efforts do not result in the creation of a new gap. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug remarked if the District is offering additional and/or refined options to meet the needs of all learners we want to make sure we are doing so within a consistent K-12 approach so that if there were say two accelerated groups coming out of the two different 6 grades, they don't come together with additional gaps.

Chairman Mann commented on the enVision program, and questioned what impacts could result from the use of different versions. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug responded there is not much of a difference. The programs used previously were wildly different. Version 2.0 has a few more applications of math, which is where some of the Teachers are seeing the difference. At HPS, they are not responding as much as 4, 5, and 6. As the level of math goes up it is easier to see some differences in expectations of the rigor involved. Does that mean you need to have a new program or does that mean we just need to incorporate some changes along the way in both directions? Having these conversations, and looking at grade 4 assessments side by side, they can identify what it is they are doing and how they are assessing it.

Chairman Mann commented it sounds like there has been a fair amount of work done already. He spoke of the identification of next steps, and questioned the timeline that is believed necessary for this to become fully implemented. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated some of the changes have already been implemented, some will come second semester, and some will come next year. It is an ever-changing process. The only change that has a budgetary impact is at the COOP School District (COOP). It is just a matter of shifting gears, thinking outside of the box, re-thinking what a schedule could look like.

Ms. St. John questioned, at the District level and with the volume of students, does the District have all it needs to be able to address the full range of Rtl. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated students who need a lot of intervention get a lot of intervention. The District has systems like the Rtl block built in. That could mean anything; extra music lesson, extra art opportunity, extra math opportunity. That is the first step at HUES; to create an additional math opportunity for some students that just need and want more. The District has FLEX grouping, which allows for the creation of a group that is already defined. If those students meet the criteria for acceleration the District can move forward with those students. There are structures in place. There is no need for a classroom.

Ms. St. John used the example of grade 5 with the 6 classrooms. There is a Math Specialist at HUES who works with both intervention and accelerated learners. She questioned how the parameters of that class size are determined. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug replied to accelerate, it can't be a percentage, can't be one class. It must be a very specific set of criteria, and that is when we get into a place where we don't want to be. We don't want to say you are in this percentage and there you go. What is seen later is if students have been pushed a little bit too far too early, it becomes a big problem when they are in high school and they start to either hate the subject, see themselves as not math learners, and just end up pulling back. It really needs to be a specific targeted group, and that is what this K-12 committee is looking at; what does it look like, identifying criteria, sticking with it, analyzing the results of that criteria, and adjusting if necessary, but really making sure that everyone is on the same page.

Ms. St. John questioned if there would be criteria established for each grade level. She spoke of information recently sent home identifying the process of how students fall into their spots, and questioned if that would be re-evaluated. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated her belief the SAU must continue to evaluate all practices, and make sense of it all. Flexible grouping is not something that she would say would not be there in September, she was just saying the SAU must analyze everything within the scope of how we teach math.

Ms. St. John questioned where the gaps are that were spoken of. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the Administration is looking at the standardized test results and seeing our students who do not perform at a proficient level. There are some in both communities. Ideally, they will be caught up prior to entering the middle school. There is concern with a population. The Administration is looking at what intervention works at the middle school level.

When asked if the students who had those scores on the tests that are now up at the middle school all received very targeted RtI, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated that was not necessarily the case. When asked where the gap is and if it is understood, she stated she believes the District understands that some students don't perform as well in math. Do we understand very specifically where those holes are; historically we haven't really dug into the data for a large group of students. If you have a known math disability, we are going to really target every specific piece. If you are generally weak it is harder to identify exactly what it is that you need. The District is doing a really good job, but that is an area where we can improve; identify specifically what those students need, and whether it is a change in the instruction for Tier I, the general classroom instruction, or if it is a change in an RtI setting.

In terms of vertical alignment, the SAU is looking to have a clearly articulated curriculum K-12 that is followed and utilized by all.

Vice Chairman Fareed commented she had hoped the direction would be to start at grade 12 and move backwards to see what needs to be done beginning in Kindergarten. She questioned if there is that kind of look as well. There are still Grade Level Expectations (GLE). The State requirement is through algebra I. She questioned if the District is looking at algebra 1 to see how we need to go downstream through Kindergarten to get the students through the best-case scenario of algebra 1. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated algebra 1, 1A, and 1B were courses where two years was spent really digging deep into the course, curriculum, language, being very intentional about the language; setting those students up for geometry to make sure there was an appropriate transfer, and then not a loss of those skills. Geometry has a lot of algebra laced through it so that students don't lose those skills in the year that we switch to geometry, and so that when a reaching algebra II it is still fresh.

Now that that conversation is going to the algebra teachers in grade 8, the conversation is this is what I need for my students. It is grades 7 and 8 compacted into one year. That doesn't mean you have to teach two years of math into one. Some of the standards overlap, some cross over. It is really kind of putting the puzzle together and figuring out what makes the most sense, and at what point in the year because you also don't want to hit your most difficult standard in June.

Vice Chairman Fareed commented the District does an excellent job of addressing the learners who need a great deal of help and those that fall in the norm/middle range. Then there are the accelerated learners. Even among them there is that learner that needs more. For the students that fall in that middle, are we looking at 9th grade algebra 1 meaning the high school course that has been very carefully vetted to look ahead to applications in geometry and algebra II, and then pushing that back into the middle school saying whatever we do in the middle school it needs to at least be that good. To look backward at that you must look at the prep in 6th grade, 5th grade, 4th grade, etc., which is what she had thought vertical alignment meant.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated it does. Part of the study is looking at how we prepare students for the next step. They look in all directions. She is looking at creating pathways as opposed to saying you are here in 3rd grade and here is your track. The SAU has started to open that up in the middle school. The targeted intervention is really for those students that fall in the middle of the spectrum.

Vice Chairman Fareed stated her experience as a parent and her observations from the years she has served on the Board have been that the transitions from our elementary system of both districts into the middle school have been sort of we get them there, they grab on, and they run. The continuity was not built in for each student to be assessed with the prior practice. In addition, a lot of parents get to that 9th and 10th grade year and realize had they been aware of certain things in 6th grade they would have planned their child's curriculum differently.

With math, a lot of students mature into ability, and suddenly find themselves willing to do more, but are not prepared to do more. Vice Chairman Fareed stated her hope whatever the Board is provided in January includes a wide variety of opportunities for students to sample, to be pushed a little, to revisit topics they may

not have not done well with initially, etc., because once they get into that 7th, 8th, and 9th grade level they have greater executive function, greater left-brain capacity, maturity, etc.

When asked, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated standards based report card, instead of providing a letter grade for a certain class, says here is what the student knows and can do, e.g., writing across curriculum, grammar, etc. It identifies specific standards instead of lumping them all together. It is another tool that helps you target specific strengths and areas for improvement.

Vice Chairman Fareed remarked we currently have lots of different sub-sets in the grade school report cards, are we not going to have a letter grade if receiving standards based report card or are the standards just sub-sets of an ultimate aggregated letter grade. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug responded, as of now in the proposed report card, we have the standards and there is no overall grade. That is being reviewed with a group of teachers.

Vice Chairman Fareed spoke of having witnessed first-hand some of the tech. training being used by/taught to 2nd and 3rd, grade, and proposed for 1st grade. She commented it was dazzling, marvelous, all students were focused and happy to be doing what they were doing. They were struggling with the instruction and the technology as it was all new, but not one of them was chatting or looking upset. When they lined up to leave the classroom, their teacher asked them some questions, e.g., what did you think of this, how many of you thought this was interesting. They all found it interesting and had different things that they liked about the lesson.

She went into a 3rd grade classroom to see how they were using the technology in a specific session. Some students in the class were working on DreamBox, which is a technology that adjusts forward and backward based on a student's knowledge. The Teacher has absolute control over what the student is doing, and sees all the results generated. The DreamBox does not teach the student anything, it is more a tool like a worksheet that provides students with calculations/problems to solve. The Teacher does all the teaching, but gets to see how the student can succeed with the topic, develop the topic, track up with that topic, etc. The worksheet tool is interactive, reactive, responsive, and generates data specific to each student. She questioned if that kind of tool would be available for every student in the elementary schools.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug provided the example of a Teacher who does the teaching and then the students are in the workshop model where different students are doing different activities. If teaching multiplication the Teacher can push out multiplication to three individuals with each being different. One may need straight multiplication while another needs to apply it a bit more. They all work on the same topic and come back at the end to have a conversation about that topic together. They learn from each other, but they all got what they needed without the Teacher having to find 4 different worksheets for each of the students. There are a variety of tools out there that just were not available 5 years ago.

Vice Chairman Fareed remarked many in the Administration explained these tools are just one component in the living classroom where a student in a workshop model will, over time, have the digital piece, have a lot of hands on pieces, straight forward one-on-one with the Teacher or the Para, etc.

Vice Chairman Fareed spoke of the accelerated learners and the very accelerated learners commenting these types of software make all the difference. The very accelerated learner in any topic is a person she thinks of as having a sort of almost magical intuit grasp of a certain kind of topic, and able to learn subject matter in less steps so that they move faster. The digital tools allow them to do it very effectively. She spoke of online learning as another tool that should be utilized to allow students to move at their own speed.

Vice Chairman Fareed spoke of the public outcry that existed when her family moved into the District in 2002. There were endless articles and Letters to the Editor, practically picketing in front of the school about the absence of gifted and talented programs especially in the Hollis Brookline area where so many families are so well educated and so skill based. It is time to focus some part of our overall plan on meeting the needs not only of the struggling learner who should get most of our attention and those that fall in the norm range that

deserve a very rich education, rich opportunity, and rich exposure, but also those students who can learn at their own speed.

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the SAU does a really nice job; has a high percentage of students doing really great things in math, but we don't want to lose a family or student to a private school because of something we are not providing. We need to remove barriers. If a student is performing at a high level, then we need to find a way to think outside of the box to make it work for that student. She is looking at meeting the needs of the students that we have and removing barriers for as many students as possible.

Chairman Mann commented when we look at metrics like the number of students that take calculus by a certain grade level it is important, but there are other success stories of students that maybe don't get to calculus but have grown immensely. He stated his belief there will be great opportunities to tell those kinds of stories.

Ms. St. John remarked meeting the needs and removing barriers was reiterated, and is something she believes important. There are students who for whatever reason, may not know that they have a mathematical mindset. There might be a child or children that have behavior or other issues, and no one is tapping into this amazing ability. She suggested, as the issue is being looked at, finding a way to unlock that in every person would be an amazing accomplishment for our District.

Vice Chairman Fareed commented following last month's presentation and request to pilot Google Classroom in the 1st grade, her initial reaction was students have enough digital time. What occurred to her as she was watching the students learn to follow the instructions and looking at the EnoBoard, was it is the pencil that is artificial. The digital interface is much easier; fine motor is less demanding, etc. It seemed she was seeing the students were freer to add content because they weren't busy wrestling with the pencil.

Chairman Mann commented this is the start of an ongoing conversation.

PUBLIC INPUT

Maryanne Shanley, 7 Buttonwood Drive

Spoke of being floored by the immensity of this task; all encompassing; 6 schools, 3 districts, all those Teachers, etc. She thanked Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug for taking this on, and making something cohesive, promising, and forward moving.

Ritu Ullal, 25 Cummings Lane

Stated her appreciation for all the work that is being done. She commented it is not just the academic need for the students; for some of these learners it gets into their building of grit and resilience, their emotional need, and the stimulation they need to be able to get through their day and be fulfilled so that they can then return home and have fun and play outside rather than return home, and let out their feelings about why the day was difficult. Some students are affected that way. Managing that will be made easier with this supportive measure.

She questioned if there is a need, given the enormous task at hand, for another person whether it be math support, an aide, etc. to help. She commented what she is learning from HUES of how much the Math Specialist does, and really does a great job on those two ends, she cannot see how that one person can be doing all the extra things that might need to get done.

Sarah Dechiaro, 30 Jambard Road

When she moved to Town people warned her; watch out, you get to 6th grade that is it, you must pick the path for your child. She questioned the timeframe for moving away from tracking. Assistant Superintendent

Bergskaug reiterated the SAU continues to evaluate and make changes. Some have started, some will come in January and some next year. This is also a process that she does not believe is ever done.

Superintendent Corey stated, at the middle school level, the Administration is proposing more staffing. The SAU has been tracking, but the desire is to move to a variety of pathways. Those pathways do involve staffing. There is a proposal in the budget for that to take place at the middle school. Going back several years that position existed, and was cut from the budget during difficult times. This logjam was created.

The SAU started to open up pathways two years ago with summer programs and more flexibility. What is being seen is there is a unique need to be as versatile as possible to meet the needs of the students. The discussions being had with the middle and high school Math Teachers weren't discussions that would take place years ago. Because it is three unique districts it is three unique budgets.

From a staffing point of view the Board and the Budget Committee in Hollis, several years back, added increased staffing to HPS to create pathways and do acceleration. Just last year or the year before Mrs. Kelly's position was brought back. Getting the positions in place is critical, and now the SAU has the infrastructure to start to support some of these pathways. The SAU is not there yet.

Superintendent Corey commented he does recognize that for some students who love math, this is their outlet. It would be like taking recess or P.E. away from other students, they would come home all pent up. These pathways are coming into place from a K-12 perspective. It is a unique situation because that K-12 exists in two separate elementary districts and a third district, the COOP.

Vice Chairman Fareed questioned if returning a Math Specialist to the middle school for the more accelerated topics, will provide more flexibility in the typical grade appropriate. Superintendent Corey responded any time you add a position you reduce overall ratios. We know we have wonderful supports at the lower end, and he thinks this would not only strengthen the acceleration program, but provide more direct instruction to those students in the middle. He commented on staffing changes that occurred in the BSD to bring class sizes closer to those of the HSD. What the Teachers are commenting on is now a student cannot hide. The Teachers are getting to every student every day.

Tiffany Ledger, 101 Mooar Hill Road

Thanked all involved for the fact that this conversation is taking place. She spoke of the work of the District and Board, and how it often focuses around budgets. The task being undertaken is large.

She stated her support of moving away from tracking to pathways. The ability for a student to decide in his/her junior year whether he/she is a math person rather than in 8th grade is important. What she was not hearing was an acknowledgment of the way the HUES program is setting students up for FLEX grouping. What she heard was a great idea of reforming the test that gets a student into compacted math, reforming that test to make it more about looking for that mathematical mindset, that growth mindset, that ability to problem solve and be creative, and yet when she heard that she got even more worried because she realized that the current program setup is not based on that.

She heard things tonight that she believes to be untrue; things like some kids are inherently good or let's just face it, it is a talent, and it is math, when research states the ability of the child has nothing to do with what they are born with, but what their mathematical learning experiences are. When talking about forming a gap, we are forming a gap in 4th grade when they move from HPS that now has shifted to a workshop. We talk about the value of the workshop model; the workshop model is meeting the needs of all levels of learners and it is growing all levels. With some tweaking, it could probably get the lowest and the highest levels and where they are at minus perhaps some intervention of the weakest. She stated the real percentage of gifted and talented is very small; few students in each grade. They go then into HUES and we form the gap. Then they stay within those gaps, and by the time they get to 6th grade they are different types of thinkers within those different levels. If we change the test to now look at different types of thinking, we're going to see the same gap until

we decide that the differentiation comes within a large group in that workshop type style where you are meeting the needs of all your students.

Ms. Ledger spoke of becoming upset when hearing talk of breaking down barriers because if our goal is to take down the barriers then we should take down the barrier of keeping them in a specific level group. We have to look at the data of students going into middle school and who gets into the compacted math because it is only the students that are in the top 2 levels because we are talking about acceleration and pace. Acceleration and pace is called fast math. Fast math is not great math. Critical thinking, deep, rich problem solving is what is defined as good math.

She remarked the District is going in such a great direction, but we cannot only look at curriculum, we have to look at the program; how is the program affecting the curriculum and learning.

Addressing the issue of transportation, Ms. Ledger spoke of comments made around the possibility of combining routes. She resides on one of those routes, and noted there to be a 15-minute variation on days that are combined. To say combining the buses will always make the last kids arrive home when it is dark, she cannot agree with because there is a variation. She suggested the bus company consider what differs on those days when the buses arrive 15 minutes earlier.

Ms. Ledger spoke of an instance in a prior year where a bus had to make its first run, and then addressed the needs of the Ski Team only to return after that to make the second run. That is something she does not wish to see occur.

Ritu Ullal, 25 Cummings Lane

Addressing vertical alignment and the transparency piece, she stated she is aware at HPS there are a lot of conversations that happen for each student where Teachers come together to discuss student needs, etc. She is pleased that occurs, and suggested, in the name of transparency, having some of those conversations with parents would be helpful, even if a Teacher were to reach out via email with a simple statement about areas of concern, etc.

DISCUSSION

- FY17 Final and FY18 First Quarter Update

Kristen Maher, Assistant Business Administrator, noted the agenda packet included the FY17 final update. The unreserved fund balance was \$584,000. From that, the allocations approved by the voters are made: \$66,000 for the HSD Expendable Trust Fund and \$13,000 for the SAU Expendable Trust Fund. The Retained Fund Balance is \$152,000. The result is \$354,640 to be returned to the general fund to offset the tax rate.

Ms. Maher spoke of the savings achieved some of which resulted from the difference in salary between retiring veteran Teachers and new Teachers coming onboard.

Superintendent Corey noted last year the Budget Committee changed how the HSD funds the contingency. Typically, there would have been a \$100,000 allocation to contingency out of the unreserved fund balance.

When asked to provide additional clarification, Superintendent Corey stated the most significant savings come out of the area of special education. That area of the budget is always a roll of the dice. He noted the benefits line that shows a negative \$35,530. Typically, by the time an employee retires he/she is on a single or two-person plan. A new employee coming on, and taking a family-plan, will result in a larger cost than what was budgeted for.

Superintendent Corey noted the Board did not decide to do any spending last May. In one sense the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) and Five-Year Plan has become very cohesive under the management of the

Business Administrator, which has reduced the amount of unanticipated expenses. In addition, there was no illness time or maternity time seen last year. When such an instance occurs, there is a period during which the District would pay two salaries.

Had the \$100,000 been allocated to the contingency fund, the unreserved fund balance would have been \$254,6430, which is around 2% of the overall budget. When you are talking about an \$11 million budget, a 2% differential is good.

Vice Chairman Fareed commented the Budget Committee looked at that number, and talked about a 2.2% guidance, possibly less depending upon how their analysis proceeds over the coming months. A 2.2% guidance on a budget that is essentially unchanged from last year. They took an amount out for what was estimated to be saved by the energy project. During the meeting, the Business Administrator spoke of some of the things the Superintendent just covered. After a half-hour discussion, there was a general rough sense that there was \$150,000 in funds that were underspent. The motion was that the HSD look at possibly a 2.2% guidance increase on a budget that was minus these figures.

She spoke of the budget process the District undertakes, which involves several rounds of review and removal of items that will not be funded in the coming year. She stated she feels strongly that if, as the result of good management practices, the District ends a year with a surplus, those funds should be utilized to cover the cost of the needs that had to be postponed.

Chairman Mann commented he has been saying since the start of the energy project that it will be important to be able to show very clearly what we're enjoying as soon as practical. Now that these systems are coming online hopefully we will see some real data based guidance on what can be expected. By the time this budget goes into effect presumably most, if not all, the work will be completed. That must show somewhere.

He remarked any time we have unexpended funds, he wants to ensure we are explaining where they came from.

When there are unexpended funds at year end, and there are needs, it is on the Board to bring that story and say we had a \$300,000 unreserved fund balance, but we are projecting these other initiatives. He stated the need to bring that picture and explain what we want to do with those funds. He is of the belief the community would support utilizing the energy savings in other areas of identified need. It is on the Board to say what that will be. If that information is not readily available and explained, then the only logical conclusion would be to adjust the budget.

Superintendent Corey remarked it is a long process. We had the first meeting with the Budget Committee. They are trying to do their job. We will do our job. We do go through multiple rounds of cuts. When all is said and done, the District will come forward with something that will move our two schools forward. He remarked he can honestly say the Budget Committee will support that, again, if the necessary information is provided.

Ms. Maher addressed the first quarter report noting in revenue, under the category of "other", the number will likely start growing over the next few months. The afterschool program neglected to pay their rent last year. She was unaware of the rental arrangement. The program caught up for the full year of rent, which hit this year's budget, which is why there is an overage in revenue. That will continue to grow because they will be paying their monthly rent.

The number identified for "Trusts" is an estimate intended for presentation to the voters.

Superintendent Corey stated it remains unknown when and in what way Kindergarten will be funded. The budget process was completed prior to any action at the State level. Those dollars will come in as revenue that was not projected.

Vice Chairman Fareed questioned if funding is guaranteed. Superintendent Corey responded that will be known when the check arrives.

- FY19 Draft Budget

Superintendent Corey noted the agenda packet included information on the first two rounds of budget discussions/cuts. The Administration asks the Principals to start off with a list of all needed and desired items. From there, they go through the various rounds of discussions/changes.

They are finishing up the 3rd round of science. As we study math, it may be that a decision is reached to move the HSD to enVision 2.0, and reallocate that curriculum money so that we are not increasing the budget; move from science to math, and phase it in over time.

When asked, he stated the monies allocated towards the third year of science can be found under Technology for HUES. The desire is to be clear to the community the next phase for the science curriculum is the iPads for the engineering to support it. Rather than putting the funds under curriculum where people will look at it as for paper, books, etc., it was moved under Technology, and a note added that the funds are intended for science curriculum.

Superintendent Corey spoke of requesting relief from guidance for the water supply issue. He commented we are in control of water, but he struggles with taking \$50,000 out of education to pay for a water system that doesn't just benefit us, it benefits the COOP and a number of others. Chairman Mann suggested the creation of an expendable trust for the water system so that funds could be allocated/retained to address future maintenance needs, etc. He would like to see the water system and its associated expenses captured in line item(s) within the budget.

Vice Chairman Fareed commented if anticipating savings on energy bills, it would be appropriate to expend some of that on the plumbing. As Chairman Mann has pointed out for many years, when the HSD must repair the water system, there is no funding for it except to come out of our operating budget.

The Board discussed the opportunities that would exist to address unanticipated costs associated with the water system as well as the transparency that would be derived were there to be a trust established that required Board approval for any expenditures.

Vice Chairman Fareed commented one thing that was discussed during the development of the energy project was that the electricity meters meter our buildings and the water pumps. Some amount of that is related to Town usage, COOP usage, individual home usage. The recommendation was to break out the metering so that the pumps have their own meters. Were there to be a water trust the funding needed to do that may be available.

Ms. St. John commented she supports breaking it out, but also feels that long-term the District should not be responsible for the water usage that is outside of the District.

Superintendent Corey stated inspections are conducted as part of the regular CIP. The District had projected the need for a freezer at a cost of \$40,000. It has been determined what is needed is the condenser at a cost of \$7,000.

Ms. St. John remarked when the budgets are finalized, it will be critical for all the School Boards to tell the story behind their budgets in as many ways as possible leading up to the Annual Meeting, so people understand beyond the numbers.

When asked, Superintendent Corey stated the part-time individual the SAU Governing Board authorized the hiring of in the Student Services Department, came on board two weeks ago, and works 1 day/week. When more is known about the long-term status, the Administration will make the Governing Board aware.

Ms. Miller spoke of an item that was removed prior to Round 2 of the budget discussions; under Facilities Maintenance, \$25,000; classroom flooring, septic-back check pit valve. She asked if the two items together were expected to cost the \$25,000. Superintendent Corey stated the back check pit valve will go in sooner rather than later, which is why that was removed.

Ms. St. John stated as both a School Board member and taxpayer, she appreciates all the work of the SAU and Business Office.

- SAU Budget Update

Superintendent Corey stated being proposed is an increase of about 5.8%, which would include the request for a full-time position for the Business Office as well as the part-time position that would support Human Resource and the curriculum office. Some adjustments were made to reach the current proposal. When the SAU Budget Committee met, there was concern related to the SAU budget in that there is the proposed budget and a default budget from which voters can choose. If the spread were significant, the result could be the loss of those positions. The solution was to build in a phase in with a couple of positions like the Assistant Business Administrators, Accounts Receivable and Payroll Specialists where they will provide for the salary increase over a two-year period instead of doing it in a single year to help offset the additional cost. For the part-time position, they went with 800 hours (not quite half time). There remains uncertainty with when the Network Administrator may retire. The cost of a single month of transition services was put into the budget rather than the previously proposed two-month period.

ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION BY MEMBER MILLER TO ADJOURN
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ST. JOHN
MOTION CARRIED
4-0-0**

The November 1, 2017 meeting of the Hollis School Board was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Date _____ Signed _____