

**HOLLIS SCHOOL BOARD
DECEMBER 1, 2021
MEETING MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Hollis School Board was conducted on Wednesday, December 1, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. at the Hollis Upper Elementary School.

Tammy Fareed, Chairman, presided:

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

Members of the Board Absent:

Also Participating: Andrew Corey, Superintendent
 Gina Bergskaug, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
 James O’Shaughnessy, Esq., Drummond Woodsum (electronically)

NON-PUBLIC

**MOTION BY MEMBER KELLNER THAT THE BOARD GO INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION PURSUANT TO RSA 91-A:3 II (L) CONSIDERATION OF LEGAL ADVICE PROVIDED BY LEGAL COUNSEL, EITHER IN WRITING OR ORALLY, TO ONE OR MORE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC BODY, EVEN WHERE LEGAL COUNSEL IS NOT PRESENT
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MANN**

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

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

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Nay:

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MOTION CARRIED

The Board went into non-public session at 6:05 p.m.

The Board came out of non-public session at 6:21 p.m.

Chairman Fareed stepped down and Vice Chairman Kellner presided.

PRESENTATION - Regarding the Complaint Investigation

Vice Chairman Kellner introduced James O’Shaughnessy, Esq., Drummond Woodsum, to provide a summary of the investigation completed regarding the conflict of interest complaint brought against Chairman Fareed.

Attorney O’Shaughnessy stated he was asked to provide legal guidance to the Board in response to the complaint alleging that a Board member, Ms. Fareed, engaged in a conflict of interest vote when she supported a mask mandate earlier in the fall/summer of 2021. As part of the process, and after reviewing meeting minutes

and speaking to his client, he hired an outside investigator, Anne Jenness, Esq., Gallagher, Callahan, and Gartrell. Attorney Jenness is a veteran attorney having experience as a long-time member of the Public Defender's office. In her profession, she holds a certification in workplace investigations and is an experienced neutral investigator. Neither Attorney Jenness nor her firm have any experience representing the Hollis School District, COOP School District or SAU 41. He felt it good to have a neutral outside attorney conduct the investigation into the factual allegations regarding the complaint.

Attorney Jenness, as part of the investigation, reviewed the complaint and attached documents, video footage from Hollis School Board meetings, and a significant amount of publicly accessible records regarding the patents held by Ms. Fareed's Husband and the company that he works for, Hollingsworth & Vose ("Hollingsworth"). She was able to review a lot of the records relevant to this because they are available electronically online. Ms. Fareed was interviewed by Attorney Jenness last week. Attorney O'Shaughnessy received a copy of the report and provided it to the School Board earlier in the day.

Based on a more likely than not standard, the investigator found that the patents attributed to Ms. Fareed's Husband were not actually owned by Ms. Fareed's Husband but by his employer. Ms. Fareed's Husband and Ms. Fareed do not have a financial or pecuniary interest in the use of facemasks in the Hollis School District. They do not have a financial or pecuniary interest in the mask mandate. The vote to approve a mask mandate was not a vote for which Ms. Fareed was or had a conflict at any point in time. The investigator also, after interviewing Ms. Fareed and reviewing the documents, found that it did not support the conclusion that Ms. Fareed had any other kind of interest in the use of face masks in the district and that she did not believe that she would benefit in any way when she took the vote on the mask mandate.

It was a pretty straightforward investigation. The allegation, on its face, seemed to make, what we call in the legal realm, an attenuated or remote claim that there was a connection between Ms. Fareed's Husband's patents and her vote. Attorney O'Shaughnessy stated he represents a great many school districts in the State and his firm a lot of municipalities in New Hampshire and Maine. The type of conflicts that typically trigger a violation is where a Board member is voting on a contract, for example, between their family's company and the district itself. That is the kind of contract where there would be a conflict because the Board member would receive a pretty clear direct financial benefit from voting on that contract.

The standard is the same in both New Hampshire law and the district policy; that there is a conflict if the Board member's interest in the outcome of the matter would create a direct personal or pecuniary benefit to that Board member. He cited *Atherton v. Concord* 1968. Basically in order for the Board member to have a conflict of interest to disqualify them, that conflict must be immediate, definite, and capable of demonstration, not remote, uncertain, contingent, and speculative. Those terms are directly out of that case law.

The allegation here that Ms. Fareed's Husband's company, for which he is an employee not an owner, does not create an immediate and definite conflict. At most it is a hypothetical, speculative or contingent conflict that really does not manifest when you do the investigation or look at the actual facts.

School Board policy [BCB](#) basically adopts the same conflict of interest standard and it prohibits Board members who have a direct pecuniary interest in a contract with the school district or in the purchase or sale of any property or equipment. The policy itself would not even be triggered by a mask vote in the first place.

Attorney O'Shaughnessy stated that to be his legal analysis of the findings as applied to the law and policy.

There is no basis for Ms. Fareed to have anything remotely close to a conflict of interest. More importantly, he wished to clarify that there was a misapplied standard in the complaint. The Complainant asserted that the vote on the policy was a quasi-judicial vote. Therefore, he believes the person was attempting to apply a different standard that would have applied to a quasi-judicial vote. First of all that is inaccurate; the adoption of a mask policy was a legislative act and when acting in a legislative capacity, boards are not held to the same standard they are held to when voting in a quasi-judicial capacity. That standard, even though this would not even create that standard, does not apply in this situation. This was not a quasi-judicial vote this was clearly a legislative policy adoption.

At the end of the complaint, he noted the Complainant, he believes (although somewhat vague) threatened to file a complaint with the State Board of Education and the Commissioner of the Department of Education if the School Board does not invalidate its vote on the mask requirement. Attorney O'Shaughnessy pointed out for the Board and public who may be confused or misled by that, that the Department of Education and the State Board of Education are actually separate entities. They are separate entities with different roles and responsibilities under New Hampshire law, and neither actually has jurisdiction or authority, under the law, to resolve this particular issue. They do not have jurisdiction over school board policy or health and safety policy enactments.

For purposes of where this goes next, the only entity that would have jurisdiction would be the Superior Court in New Hampshire. He would see this, and he does see this, as a collateral attack at the mask mandate itself. We know, because it has been well publicized, that there have already been attempts to attack the mask mandate in New Hampshire and various litigation across the State, which have been unsuccessful to date. He felt comfortable saying he is pretty certain that this complaint, if filed in Superior Court, would likely meet the same fate.

**MOTION BY MEMBER ROY TO ACCEPT THE INVESTIGATIVE REPORT, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MANN
MOTION CARRIED**

4-0-1

Member Fareed Abstained

Vice Chairman Kellner stepped down and Chairman Fareed presided.

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS - None

CORRESPONDENCE/RESIGNATIONS/NOMINATIONS

Superintendent Corey spoke of the unfortunate rise in the number of COVID positive cases going back November 12th until the 23rd during which the highest number of cases in Hollis and Brookline were seen. The numbers went from a typical 30-40 cases to 72-77. The numbers remained that high until returning from the holiday. We are starting to see another dip in the numbers (trend). We went from 66 on the 29th to 32 this afternoon. There are currently 23 cases in Hollis (6 are new) and 9 in Brookline (no new cases).

The SAU continues to evaluate masks. We are presently in a period where a number of families are choosing to be vaccinated. We thank those who have done so and respect the choices of those who have chosen not to. The plan, from his viewpoint, is to remain with the mask mandate through the holidays. An assessment will be done in the coming weeks to see how vaccination appointments are going as it is becoming very difficult to get an

appointment. Brookline experienced an outbreak at CSDA. A pretty significant group of students are unable to get the vaccine until going through a period of time where their bodies are allowed to rest.

Right now, if everything were to remain the same, and the number of cases continue to decline, he would likely be looking to return from the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday weekend in a mask optional environment.

Superintendent Corey spoke of word received of a new variant for which there is not yet much known. He follows the information provided by Dr. Chan, State Epidemiologist.

Superintendent Corey thanked the teachers, administrators, students and families. The numbers in the Hollis School District have remained very low, which he believes can be a good deal credited to the families. If their child is experiencing symptoms, they have kept them home and have worked closely with the two nurses in the district. There are about 13 school days remaining before the winter holiday break.

Asked if Board action would be needed to make that decision, Superintendent Corey noted when the Board adopted the Plan, it provided him the ability to either institute masks or pull them away. He is very comfortable doing that. There are local pediatricians and nurses that have children in our schools who provide help and guidance. The district participates in State calls regularly and the school nurses are in regular contact with NH DHHS and keep him well updated.

Chairman Fareed commented on having read a news article wherein Governor Sununu announced statewide increased locations for booster shots. We might also see an improvement in transmissibility through boosters being available to high school students, etc. Superintendent Corey commented currently in Hollis approx. 72-73% of the population has had a single dose of the vaccine and approx. 65% of the population is fully vaccinated.

Member Roy remarked she spoke with her children’s pediatrician, who is a local doctor who treats many students in HUES and HPS. She is very much on board with ensuring mask use continues through the holidays for exactly the reasons outlined. She stated her support of the decision.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Hollis School Board [November 3, 2021](#)

The following amendments were offered:

- Page 3, Line 1; insert “Corey” following “Superintendent”
- Page 10, Line 30; remove “and” before “abuse”
- Page 16, Line 10; replace “educated” with “educating”
- Page 18, Line 9; replace “home” with “him”
- Page 19, Line 39; replace “she” with “he”
- Page 20, Line 22; correct the spelling of “Corey”

MOTION BY MEMBER ARTHUR TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ROY

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

PUBLIC INPUT

Aaron Penkacik, 133 Dow Road, Hollis

Thanked the Board, Administration, and legal counsel for the attention to the complaint that was filed remarking it is important that it be looked at in detail because it is an important issue.

He questioned if Attorney O'Shaughnessy was representing SAU 41 or the School Board. Superintendent Corey stated Attorney O'Shaughnessy is the attorney for the Hollis School District. The SAU is the umbrella that represents or services the three entities, which are Hollis, Brookline, and COOP School districts.

Chairman Fareed remarked what is helpful to think about is that there are four legal entities. The SAU is a State agency and each of the two elementary school districts and the COOP school district are State agencies all under that SAU 41 umbrella. Attorney O'Shaughnessy did the work for the Hollis School Board and the Hollis School District.

Mr. Penkacik questioned who was paying the attorney.

Chairman Fareed stated the Hollis School Board and Hollis taxpayers paid the fees for the attorneys who worked on this case. Mr. Penkacik asked for clarification the School District is paying the cost and was told that is the case.

Mr. Penkacik requested a copy of the attorney's report, in writing. He heard the result and has discomfort with the findings. The attorney claimed that the Board is a legislative body, and it is not. It does not make law. It is a judicial branch, enforces law. He commented you are shaking your head no, but you do not make law, you cannot make law in the school board. Chairman Fareed began to respond when Member Arthur called for a Point or Order requesting the Board be careful not to begin to engage in back and forth discussion during the public input portion of the meeting.

Mr. Penkacik stated this to be a conflict of interest that he continues to believe to be real and stated it would be taken to the State; it needs to go there because you cannot ignore it. He stated facts were being ignored and legal counsel reached conclusions that are inaccurate. "We are not done with this."

Karen Bridgeo, 65 Buttonwood Drive

Thanked members of the Board and Administration for the work they do for the students.

Maureen Maisttison, 60 Milton Place

Thanked the Board and Administration for all of their hard work. She is aware there is a lot of pressure to remove the mask requirements in the Hollis School District, and requested it remain in place as it is working to reduce transmission in the schools. No mask requirement outside of the schools is resulting in actual transmissions. Her son, who did not get infected, missed 11 school days last month. It was not because of an exposure in the school, it was from exposure in a place outside of the school. That exposure resulted in transmission and a death. She stated her desire for this to go away, but the masks are important and are really doing a great job. The kids do not care, they are rolling with it.

Tiffany Testa, 101 Mooar Hill Road

Stated she too supports the Board and Administration holding the line regarding masks believing the representation of voice that the Board hears is not the representation of all, and there have been meetings where there have been just as many parents upset at wanting masks in some of the older grades. At the COOP School District, there were parents stating the desire for masks to be reinstated. She is a teacher that works in a school that was out for an entire year and is now back in the school (MA school). They will wear masks until the end of the year and then some because that is what the science states.

Chet Wisboski, Farm Pond Lane

Pointed out that Ms. Fareed kind of presented herself as some sort of a mask expert. It is his understanding that her Husband's name is on the patent. He believes that she is lying presenting herself as some sort of an expert because her Husband's name is on a patent, unduly influenced this board, and the vote was basically done with that. The vote was based on her own supposed expert testimony. That is something he is going to bring up to the State. It is not over yet.

Tiffany Testa, 101 Mooar Hill Road

Wished to state she is sorry to the students, sorry to the Board, and sorry to the community that we have wasted so much time on trying to manipulate and slander a person. It is an absolute ridiculous argument that has been posed that this is a conflict of interest, and she is sorry. She wished to remind the Board that they were voted in by a community that wants them to do the hard work. She understands the need to utilize legal services, but it is ridiculous that the taxpayers have to pay for this. The fact that taxpayer dollars are being wasted when they could be spent on other things is an issue for her. The finding has been stated. She is hopeful we can move on to more important things.

Mary Ann Damian, 7 Farm Pond Lane

Apologized for what a previous speaker has gone through; however she did state that all children do not care about wearing masks, and that is not the case. She does not believe she can speak for all children. That needs to be thought out; there are kids with special needs, allergies, other medical problems for whom wearing a mask is very hard. Emotionally we should all be very aware that this causes problems. They don't get to see each other's faces, expressions. This mentally is abuse for younger children and even older children. As a community we should know there are a lot of issues going on where our kids need help. It is extremely important for students to not have masks and feel they can communicate with one another. Sure it is important for everyone to stay healthy, but at what price? What price are we giving to have our kids not be emotionally stable or feel good about themselves?

Chairman Fareed noted the agenda identified the period for public comment as beginning at 6:55 p.m. As the meeting has run faster than anticipated, and the next agenda item is identified as beginning at 7:10 p.m., she questioned the will of the Board regarding consideration of entertaining additional public comment should resident(s) wishing to address the Board arrive prior to the 7:10 p.m. time.

Member Roy commented, for a limited period of time, she would be fine with that approach.

Member Mann remarked, under these circumstances, he would not have any objection, but wished to point out that the agenda states the times are approximate and may change. However, he is sensitive to the fact that we

are going through a difficult time and there is a lot of debate in the community particularly around some of the operational requirements in place.

Member Mann remarked, during public input, the Board heard some concerns about the findings of our attorney. He pointed out our attorney was speaking from the standpoint of our policies and other aspects that govern the district. The findings of the actual investigation were by someone other than our attorney, a disinterested third party, not connected to this district, who does this work.

Chairman Fareed questioned if members of the audience understood that from what Attorney O'Shaughnessy stated; a second attorney was utilized not related to the Board's other work.

PRINCIPALS' REPORT

Superintendent Corey highlighted items from the reports that were provided as part of the [agenda](#) packet.

November 29th through December 3rd is the Scholastic Book Fair. He thanked the families and students who participated.

The new fencing around the playground structure at the Hollis Upper Elementary School (HUES) is complete. The fencing along the property from the playground into the field is in process.

Officer Kush has been away for professional development related to the DARE program. He will be starting that up.

At the Hollis Primary School (HPS) a new event began November 29th with students learning about chess. Although the game will be played, students are learning about chess "characters," "decision making," and "solutions." As students become more familiar with the game, we hope to introduce student chess mentors.

DISCUSSION

- Fiscal Year 2023 – Draft SAU Budget

Superintendent Corey noted the SAU41 Budget Sub-committee met the prior week. Membership consists of a representative from each of the school boards, budget/finance committees, and SAU.

The proposed draft budget has been discussed with the Hollis Budget Committee and is supported by both the Hollis Budget Committee and the SAU 41 Budget Sub-committee. Were the SAU not making the request for a new position, the adjusted budget would be higher than what is being proposed.

The new position requested is that of a Compliance and Communications Specialist. Since last reviewed by the Board, the job description (copy attached as part of the agenda) has been reviewed by each of the other two school boards and the finance/budget committees as well as the SAU Budget Sub-committee. Feedback was offered and incorporated. What was clear is that the position is that of compliance. Members of the Hollis Budget Committee felt the position title should reflect that. Superintendent Corey went over the language that has been added (delineated by underlining). Language was added to section 1(b) in response to the yearly policies/laws enacted by the Legislature. These policies/laws are beneficial for the schools and have raised the accountability for all schools across the State. However, each of those surveys, grants, etc., has become more time consuming. This position would assist the Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent with a number of those pieces that have to be filed each year.

Under section 1(g), language was added regarding communication policies and procedures for handling sensitive information. Superintendent Corey spoke of discussions around Federal grants, procurement, and the ability for an additional set of eyes to review those types of documents. Section 1(r) addresses communicating and executing general assurances related to all State and Federal grants. Superintendent Corey remarked being 4 separate entities means that every grant we have has four separate components.

The job description will be discussed further at the Public Hearing, which will be conducted as part of the SAU 41 Governing Board meeting beginning at 6:00 p.m. on December 16th. Meeting location is the Captain Samuel Douglass Academy in Brookline.

- Fiscal year 2023 Draft Hollis Budget – Board Review

The budget has reached guidance provided by the Budget Committee and represents an increase (over the current budget) of 3.2%. Warrant Articles include allocations to the Contingency Fund (\$95,000), SAU Maintenance Trust (\$23,970), HSD Maintenance Trust (\$150,000), Special Education Trust (\$25,00), and the SAU Assessment/apportionment for the SAU budget (\$625,021). Discussions continue around the SAU barn (placeholder included). Were all requests to pass, the total budget would represent an increase of 3.8%.

The district is finalizing discussions with the Hollis Education Support Staff Association (HESSA) and is still in discussion with the Hollis Education Association (HEA). Those would be separate warrant articles.

Superintendent Corey spoke of the new item requests and that the draft represents a very good educational budget. At this point in the process, the proposed positions of Directed Food Service Substitute and Directed Classroom Substitute have been able to be maintained; positions/costs that would be shared and must be supported by all three districts.

The Music Teacher position is increasing (based on need) from a 0.6 position to a 0.8 position. The number of days/week of the Special Education Secretary are slated to increase. Three (3) paraprofessional positions are increasing (based on student needs). The ESOL Teacher position will be shared with the COOP School District (past practice). Were the direction to be two part-time positions, it is unlikely the positions could be filled.

Under the heading of academics, the new items listed have not changed from the start of the review process. There is excitement around that as the desire is not to make cuts to the academic portion.

There are zero dollars identified for new items under the heading of new computer equipment. The district utilized Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funds to address those needs. Superintendent Corey noted the SAU was approved for E-rate funds that could be used to purchase computers (approx. \$215,000 broken down into the three districts). Those dollars will be used to purchase Chromebooks, Chromebook cases, licensing, and warranty.

The district is upgrading the filtering software, which is a compliance requirement for the E-rate funding. The software ensures that students utilizing devices are restricted from accessing inappropriate content.

All three districts are discussing the purchase of a Facilities truck and trailer (cost would be shared). Since coming on board, the Facilities Director has utilized his personal trailer on multiple occasions and demonstrated the need (previously utilized U-Haul rentals). The actual dollar amount may change as information is being sought on the most cost efficient way to proceed; own vs lease.

Bollards will be added to the front of each building (safety issue).

Work proposed for outdoor areas includes updating of playgrounds and swings, placement of mulch, and the addition of benches and picnic tables. One of the pieces that did not make it through to this point in the budget process was the pavilion. The Administration will look at the budget in the spring. If there is the ability to move forward with that project, they will.

Superintendent Corey spoke of having enjoyed working with the Hollis Budget Committee noting they have always taken great pains to stay away from educational pieces. When they provide guidance, the Administration looks to accommodate their needs as representatives of the taxpayers. This is a process that has worked very well.

Member Arthur asked where the price point is for the cost of the pavilion and was told it is about \$32,000. There have been cost escalations.

Chairman Fareed remarked this budget process instituted a few years back has been elucidating and illuminating. It shows the thinking, patterns, and even price shifts.

Vice Chairman Kellner stated appreciation for being able to do a year-to-year comparison; new item requests that don't make it through to the final round of review this year may be revisited in future years.

Vice Chairman Kellner asked for clarification of the cost shown under the heading of the Maintenance Expendable Trust for asbestos windows. Superintendent Corey remarked at HPS the last room on the right side of the hallway heading towards the cafeteria is a conference room that has what were previously outside windows (original to the building). The asbestos is in the putty that holds the glass in. The asbestos is encapsulated so it is fine. The Business Administrator has an asbestos plan for each building having that issue. Every year the Administration looks to address the plan(s). A lot was done in conjunction with the energy projects. Those windows were one of the items that just spiked in cost. Another area where this situation exists is with what he calls the fishbowl windows down the 1st grade corridor.

Chairman Fareed commented it was pre-empted by the finding of asbestos under the old boilers that were removed. That had not been identified even by the State. It was a surprise and work had to come to a halt to address it properly.

Chairman Fareed questioned line item 5120-910 – Bond Interest; reduction of \$13,282.75. Superintendent Corey commented it is similar to a mortgage where the further you go into the loan you pay less towards interest and more towards the principle.

Asked about the increase in days for the Special Education Secretary (shared across two buildings), Superintendent Corey stated it to be student driven. He provided the example of the increased number of children in the three and four-year-old programs. It is also related to increasing compliance requirements.

The proposed increase in the Music Teacher position from a 0.6 to 0.8 is due to the growth of the music program and trying to meet all of the needs of the varied students. Asked if the increase in hours would trigger benefits, Superintendent Corey stated he would inquire of Human Resources as each district is different. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated her belief the point at which benefits are triggered is 0.83.

Chairman Fareed spoke of being pleased that the directed substitute positions and paraprofessionals remain in the draft budget. She questioned if there might be economy of scale savings that could be achieved should the district have the ability to utilize the Town's purchasing power when considering the purchase of the truck and trailer. Superintendent Corey stated that conversation could be had.

Asked about the Special Education Trust and his comfort level with the proposed allocation and balance versus the anticipated need, Superintendent Corey responded the account is in good shape noting where that has become a saving grace in another district is with the unexpected move-ins. He commented on the difficulty of planning a budget 18 months in advance. There are unknowns.

Chairman Fareed spoke of the job description for the proposed Compliance and Communications Specialist. A former board member, who is in the public relations profession, had strongly recommended a position like this be created. At the time, there was not an appetite for that. The demands and needs of communicating had not become so acute. We still had some representation in newsprint, which is completely gone. At the time she had felt some reservation about it because the last thing she would like to see, as a taxpayer/parent/citizen, is a P.R. campaign from public institutions. She would be very unhappy if this turned into a position that put out polished communications. We need communications not P.R.

The description made her very happy. She has volunteered at the SAU photocopying, printing, filing, etc. during times of staff shortages. It is an incredibly busy place, and everyone is saturated with tasks and work. This job description makes sense to her. This position would add value to the SAU's workload, and in a way that communicates that to the public and makes the staff, district, and public work in a much more integrated, productive way.

Member Roy stated her belief the Administration is optimizing the position by adding that compliance component. That was on point with the recommendation that was made. In her three years on the Board she has consistently heard, and no louder than in the last year, how much the citizenry wants consistent communication from the districts and the SAU. They want it and need it. They have become electronically savvy. We need to have that communication happening electronically as well as on paper. She is supportive of the position and believes the right price point is attributed to it.

Vice Chairman Kellner commented on the amount of public input provided at the last Hollis Budget Committee meeting questioning whether we should start with this as a contracted position to avoid the benefit cost associated with a full-time position and allow the SAU to assess whether this is a temporary or long-term need. Superintendent Corey stated the days of the consultant not getting an hourly rate that has benefits built in are gone. We see that in O.T., P.T. speech and language services, etc. When we cannot hire someone, we are asked to pay \$180-\$200/hour. The agencies will not obtain employees unless able to offer some benefits. Right now where there are not enough people to fill the open positions, it is very difficult.

He highlighted a few responsibilities he and the Assistant Superintendent have in terms of compliance (yearly events that occur periodically throughout the year); Indoor Air Quality, 21st Century Learning Survey, School Safety Data Collection, A12B Class and Staffing Form, A12D Central Office Personnel, A12E Homeschool Account, A12F Teacher Attainment and Average Salary. There is a survey about the school board and one about the teachers' salary scale. Those are all required. Then they switch over and have IDA Special Education funds for both regular education and preschool for Hollis, Brookline, and the COOP. There are Title II, Title IV, and General Assurances for Hollis, Brookline, and the COOP. There is General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Compliance, which is the financial end that has to be filed for Hollis, Brookline and the COOP. Because we are a separate SAU, we have the SAU 41 program assurances for any grant funding coming

through the SAU. There is the SAU 41 ESSER funds and the GEPA statement. There is a lot of repetition, and he would like to say it is one time and they are done, but it is not. It is very very difficult.

We have to comply with the National Lunch Program and provide all required data. Professional development requirements for about 500 staff and paraprofessionals with the DOE. The DOE-25 (annual financial report) and additional financial requirements. The 14C data for Adequacy, which holds back payment if not addressed correctly. We are required to do ESOL data collection (3 times/year) to chart progress. Every year the Legislature decides that they are going to change some things. That means every year we have to go back to our policy books and address policies impacted by legislative updates. All criminal background checks go through the Assistant Superintendent or Superintendent; that includes every new member and every volunteer. They are required to do the Civil Rights data collection and annually do the policy manuals as well as periodic update of the Articles of Agreement for the COOP.

Those are just the things that are constant every year. Next year there is a math review for curriculum. That means there is a certain amount of the Assistant Superintendent's time already committed next year to math. The Superintendent spends more time on the facility side. The past few years his time has been spent with the Hollis projects. If all goes well it will be moving over to the Brookline projects. The Facilities Director addresses the day-to-day and annual projects, e.g., paving of parking lots.

The SAU has one receptionist and one Administrative Assistant. There is no administrative support for the Assistant Superintendent or Superintendent. That is somewhat by choice. About 7 years ago the Superintendent traded his secretary because there was a need for more assistance in the Business Office. Given the importance of overseeing the funding, it was a choice that was made. It has worked out very well because now we produce budget documents like the one presented, and regular expense and revenue reports are shared.

Vice Chairman Kellner commented highlighting the compliance piece will help convince the taxpayers that this position is not a kneejerk reaction to the current environment. Member Roy stated agreement.

Chairman Fareed asked if the qualifications stated for the position would satisfy what sounds, on the surface, like a position that has a great deal of writing, budgetary and other skills, e.g., would a degree in accounting be needed. Superintendent Corey responded the interview committee will sort through that. At times, what we see is there are those who have built a career off their experience and knowledge but may have done so in the absence of a particular degree. The desire is to not discount those applicants.

- 4 Lund Lane Property Update (lease committee – renovations – potential warrant article)

Following the last discussion, the Business Administrator put in a placeholder. Superintendent Corey stated the desire to spend a good amount of time at the January meeting discussing this and deciding if the timing is right. The SAU building has some issues, but at the same time what is being seen are increased numbers of 3 and 4 year-olds in kindergarten and programming issues. His reservation is not necessarily in doing some sort of study, it is doing the study for the right piece, e.g., should we be looking at a preschool-kindergarten that can meet many of the needs that we are seeing. He recommended the placeholder remain and that a discussion occur at a future meeting.

Based on the report provided on the property, it does not make financial sense to let a bond. It would be a wonderful and highly usable building, but you would still have an entire section that was not ADA compliant, etc. The Administration has and will continue to survive there. There will be discussion of bathroom upgrades that need to occur.

Additional information will be provided as to what the vision is even though not yet fully vetted. There are space issues being experienced because of the programming needs of individuals, e.g., students come with more equipment, more things are required, etc. Were we to move preschool or kindergarten to a different building, which would allow HPS to actually have a cafeteria, we would not be wasting space, we would be repurposing and preparing for the next wave of students that will come to Hollis and Brookline.

Member Mann questioned if there is any subject-matter experience that would be sought to help put that vision for the facility in place. Superintendent Corey spoke of having gotten to know some experts who participate in HSMART. One is the architect. For what he would say would be cost effective funds that could likely be found within the budget, the Administration could start more of the global view. Perhaps it is next year that we would determine more of what it would cost. It may be that a new SAU is a few years away because it will have the potential of having a couple of features, one being preschool, kindergarten, service environments as well as an attached SAU. Member Mann questioned if there would be an expenditure approval in January as part of the conversation to get the work started and was told that could be the way to go. The budget is running tight currently and was frozen the previous day as a means of catching up, e.g., have had some special education and other costs come in, and the approach is to determine exactly where we are before purchasing something that we may have to decide not to do. Superintendent Corey remarked he could see coming back before the Board for that type of expenditure in the April/May timeframe to utilize unreserved fund balance.

Vice Chairman Kellner noted the report references concern about the files and records stored in the attic and questioned if alternative storage options are being explored. Superintendent Corey spoke of the temperature controlled storage unit that has taken a great load of H.R. documents, which has allowed for the disbursement of the weight in the attic and of how special education has become more streamlined. From a legal standpoint, when a child reaches age, we send a notification informing the family of the option to come and retrieve the student's files or have them destroyed.

DELIBERATIONS

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the memo submitted by the Business Administrator regarding the renovation of the SAU bathroom

Superintendent Corey spoke of the escalation of costs being experienced. When the Board discussed this issue last year, the estimate for addressing the bathroom renovation was \$15,000. The proposed work would include removal of the bathtub and creation of a hallway to avoid having five people have to regularly walk through an employee's office to do their jobs. The estimate has become an actual cost of \$34,000.

Based on current discussions, it is not believed the long-term vision is to remain in the facility, but addressing the bathrooms is key. Getting rid of the tub would also likely help from a resale point of view as the property would likely remain commercial space.

The current balance in the SAU Building Expendable Trust Fund is \$88,946. With a cost of \$34,000, the FY22 ending balance would be \$54,946. The FY23 budget includes an allocation of \$23,970, which would result in an FY23 ending balance of \$78,916.

Except for minor repairs such as painting, a large expense is not anticipated as we work our way towards what the new vision will be.

MOTION BY MEMBER ARTHUR TO SCHEDULE A PUBLIC HEARING NOTIFYING OF THE REQUEST TO EXPEND ADDITIONAL FUNDS FROM THE SAU BUILDING EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER KELLNER

ON THE QUESTION

Member Roy questioned if the additional costs are all material related and was told it is labor and materials. Asked why labor cost has increased, Superintendent Corey stated what is being seen is costs being passed on due to labor shortages and increased costs there. The desire is to conduct a public hearing to gain public input.

Asked if there could be documentation, e.g., photographs to present so that a clear understanding can be provided of the existing conditions, he indicated photographs can be available.

MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding Policy **DAF** – Administration of Federal Grant Funds
Given its Second Reading;

MOTION BY MEMBER ARTHUR TO ACCEPT THE SECOND READING OF POLICY DAF – ADMINISTRATION OF FEDERAL GRANT FUNDS
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER KELLNER

ON THE QUESTION

No changes have been proposed since the time of the first reading. Asked if there were a reason the Board would not waive a third reading and adopt, given no changes are proposed, Chairman Fareed responded the convention is for 3 readings. One of the reasons for that is to provide the public the opportunity to digest the information. Given that the initial changes are in response to recently changed legislation, she would favor going through the process of the three readings.

Asked if adoption of the policy is required to ensure compliance, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug responded no, at the end of the day we have to follow the law, which supersedes the policy. Updating the policy is more of a housekeeping measure.

Member Roy suggested the link included to the definition of “contractor” be considered for removal.

MOTION CARRIED
5-0-0

- To see what action the Board will take regarding Policy **EEAEA** - Mandatory Drug and Alcohol Testing
Given its First Reading;

MOTION BY MEMBER ARTHUR TO ACCEPT THE FIRST READING OF POLICY EEAEA – MANDATORY DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING, AS PRESENTED
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER KELLNER

ON THE QUESTION

Member Arthur stated there to be added language that provides the reason for the policy and definitions. Being removed is an area for employee and supervisor signatures, which is not standard in our policies. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated a copy of the policy will be provided to the transportation company every year for them to approve and abide by. The bulk of the policy is legally mandated. It is already in agreement with what is present in the transportation contract. It is a matter of bringing the policy up to date with legal requirements and removing superfluous items such as the signature page.

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY MEMBER ARTHUR TO ADJOURN

MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER ROY

MOTION CARRIED

5-0-0

The December 1, 2021, meeting of the Hollis School Board adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Date _____ Signed _____