

**HOLLIS BROOKLINE COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BOARD**

**JULY 22, 2020**

**MEETING MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board was conducted on Wednesday, July 22, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. at the Hollis Brookline Middle School Multi-Purpose Room.

Holly Deurloo Babcock, Chairman, presided:

Members of the Board present: Tom Solon, Vice Chairman  
Kate Stoll, Secretary  
Elizabeth Brown (arrived at 6:03 p.m.)  
Krista Whalen  
Beth Janine Williams

Members of the Board absent: Cindy VanCoughnett

Also in attendance: Andrew Corey, Superintendent  
Gina Bergskaug, Assistant Superintendent  
Bob Thompson, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services  
Rick Barnes, Principal, Hollis Brookline High School  
Tim Girzone, Principal, Hollis Brookline Middle School

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**APPOINTMENT OF PROCESS OBSERVER**

Chairman Deurloo Babcock appointed Tom Solon as Process Observer.

**AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS**

A request was made to amend the agenda by providing for public comment following each of the discussion items.

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

**ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board. . . . . June 30, 2020

**MOTION BY MEMBER SOLON TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED**

**MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**6-0-0**

Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board – **Public Hearing** . . . . . June 30, 2020

**MOTION BY MEMBER SOLON TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED**

**MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**6-0-0**

**MOTION BY MEMBER SOLON TO TAKE FROM THE TABLE THE MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR MEETING, PUBLIC HEARING, AND NON-PUBLIC SESSION CONDUCTED ON JUNE  
17, 2020**

**MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**6-0-0**

Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board. . . . . June 17, 2020

*The following amendments were offered:*

- Page 1, Line 38; replace “council” with “counsel”
- Page 3, Line 34; insert “in-person, and” before “hybrid”
- Page 4, Line 6; “requirement” should be plural
- Page 5, Line 38; replace “out” with “our”
- Page 11, Line 4; replace “we” with “we are”
- Page 11, Line 7; insert “we” before “have”

**MOTION BY MEMBER SOLON TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED**

**MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**6-0-0**

Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board – **Public Hearing** . . . . . June 17, 2020

*The following amendment was offered:*

Page 1; note that Kelly Seeley, Business Administrator, participated electronically

**MOTION BY MEMBER SOLON TO ACCEPT, AS AMENDED**

**MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**6-0-0**

Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board – **Non-Public**. . . . . June 17, 2020

**MOTION BY MEMBER SOLON TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED**

**MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**6-0-0**

**NOMINATIONS/RESIGNATIONS/CORRESPONDENCE**

Chairman Deurloo Babcock noted the Board is in receipt of numerous email communications in regard to the discussion items, and is grateful to the community for the input. The questions have been compiled into a frequently asked question document that Board members have access to so that the concerns can be addressed. The document is available to guide the discussion, and the Board will look to cover as many of the questions as possible.

**DISCUSSION**

- Return to School Building Plan 2020-2021

Chairman Deurloo Babcock thanked the Administration for the incredible amount of time, effort, energy diligence, consideration, and compassion with which they have approached this presentation.

Superintendent Corey spoke of the yeoman's work that has gone into the Return to School Building Plan (Plan). He recognized the efforts of Assistant Superintendents Bergskaug and Thompson and the Leadership Team, which is made up of Principals and Assistant Principals from across the SAU who have worked on this for the past 6 weeks. He expressed gratitude to the 60 teachers who contributed to this group and the Community Advisory Committee that has been incredibly valuable (local pediatricians, mental health experts, and others having expertise). All input received as a result of the meetings of the three school boards will be used to guide adjustments to the Plan, where needed.

Assistant Superintendent Thompson spoke of two reoccurring themes that will be heard throughout the presentation. The first is that the health and safety of our students and staff is absolutely paramount. The Hollis-Brookline Cooperative School District is an award winning district when it comes to health and safety. We are an exemplar around the State, which was true prior to the pandemic and will continue to be as we move forward. The second is parent and student choice. Parents will have the option to have their children remain in remote learning or return to the physical school environment. It is believed, based upon current local conditions, that the SAU can offer this for a September 3<sup>rd</sup> start. As of today, there are zero active cases of COVID in the two communities. Since May, there has been trending downward data in terms of the number of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths. This could change, and if it does, we will re-evaluate our position, and look for other possible options.

The Plan being presented is based upon current data. More important than that data, is conversations that have been had with parents. As a Leadership Team, they have talked with a lot of parents who have expressed concerns about having their children return to a physical school environment. Their children may suffer from an immune disorder, they may have a family member that is immune compromised, their children might have anxiety about returning to the building, and they would like to remain in remote. He spoke of conversations with parents who have children who have school phobia for whom remote learning has worked well. That should be an option for those families. There have also been a lot of conversations with parents who are really concerned about their children's social-emotional wellbeing, about isolation, and really feel it is important that their children get back to a physical school environment. These parents do understand that has some inherent risk to it, but are willing to accept that.

Assistant Superintendent Thompson remarked this is not an easy decision for parents to make. Many of the educators that worked to develop the plan are parents. When we developed this plan, we really did so not only through the lens of being an educator, but also through the lens of being a parent.

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

The process for planning the 2020-2021 school year began in April. On April 16<sup>th</sup>, Governor Sununu issued an Executive Order that all schools would remain in remote learning for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. At that time, the Task Force began developing plans for the return to the school environment, which began with the collection of a tremendous amount of data. They went through and read every report they could find that provided schools with guidance from a government or non-government agency. Each one of the reports had a different lens whether the CDC or American Academy of Pediatrics, that really helped to inform the process as the Task Force began to plan for the school year. They also engaged in conversations with

educators across the globe (Asia and Europe because these schools have been in session). When we were moved to remote, some of these countries were actually opening back up.

The Incident Command System (ICS) plays an important role when trying to develop streamlined communication and decision making models. ICS is utilized in emergency management, which is something the SAU does really well. That is the approach that was used for planning for a return to school. A framework was developed based upon guiding resources; American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) (report released in June), Center for Disease Control (CDC), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (comprehensive report on air quality), Learning Policy Institute (LPI) (tracked several counties and the plans they put in place providing an additional framework), National Association of School Nurses (NASN), National Council on School Facilities (NCSF), New Hampshire Grades K-12 Back-To-School Guidance (issued last week), New Hampshire School Nurses Association (NHSNA), and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Utilizing the ICS, they divided the work into categories; instructional, technology, human resources, health and safety, facilities, student services, food service, extra-curricular, and transportation. The help of over 60 educators (from each one of the 6 buildings) was solicited; administrators, teachers, support staff, para-educators, food service workers, coaches. Looked at was each person's expertise and where they could be put to be most effective in the development of these plans. A nurse was added to each one of the sub-committees. Each group had a facilitator. Each facilitator met weekly with the SAU Administration to report out on progress and brainstorm.

They reviewed considerations and added district specific considerations, and at the end of the day, compiled all of the information from the various sub-committees and created a document that is about 45 pages in length. From that document, they created a summary report, which was included with the agenda packet.

Once the work of the sub-committees was completed, the community advisory group was established. The group vetted the plan and provided feedback. The plan was adjusted based on that feedback. As the current conditions may change, the SAU will continue to consult with this group to ensure continued feedback.

Gina Bergskaug, Assistant Superintendent, spoke of surveys sent out at the end of the 2019-2020 school year; one to all families (roughly 56% participation) and a separate survey to instructional staff. The specific question asked was "Based on what we know today, if precautions are taken, but social distancing was not possible, would your child attend school in person in the fall?" The results varied between the buildings, but overall pretty consistently 72% yes, which lead her to believe that our already decent class sizes would be cut to about 70%. Although understood this is not binding, it did provide a starting point to get a feel for where our families were at that time.

The draft plan road map really addresses two options. It is understood that every family has a different set of circumstances, concerns, and a different set of fears and anxiety. Families need to reflect on their own personal risk tolerance and make a choice.

The plan includes two options. Option 1 is return to in-person school on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Parents would also identify whether they would drop off and pick up their child at school every day or utilize bus transportation, knowing that masks are required on the bus. In addition, all students will need a dedicated device with them at all times. They can either bring their own device, assuming it meets the specifications, or utilize a district loaned device.

The other option is to resume remote learning on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Those families would review and accept remote learning 2.0, which incorporates improvements/changes that have been made to the process as a result of

responses to a survey distributed to families and faculty. Those students would also need a personal dedicated device. If needed, one could be provided by the district.

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

### **In-Person Learning**

Prior to students arriving on campus, parents will assess each child using a brief screening tool, which includes taking a daily temperature.

Parents would be required to contact the school to report any symptoms. Parents are only able to send students to school if they are completely symptom free and free of exposure. Parents would drop the students off at the designated time or at the bus stop. Students arrive and are required to follow the protocol for entering the school building, including wearing a mask and maintaining physical distancing.

### **Early September**

Training will be provided to students on personal and public health measures, new procedures in the school building, which include identifying which spaces are not available, e.g., with every student having their own device, there is no longer a need for a shared computer lab space (this year). That space would not be available to students during the day unless repurposed for another classroom space. Training will be provided on all needed technology tools used in the classroom. In the transition to remote learning, students were exposed to a variety of new digital tech tools. Proper training and explanation will be provided to students, teachers, and parents (including passwords). As guidance around COVID-19 changes over the course of the year, students will be provided with updated training.

### **Arrival**

Students will use hand sanitizer at the station prior to entering the classroom and will follow procedures and walk straight to their assigned seat. Every student, in each of their classes, will have an assigned seat, which is physically distanced per CDC guidelines (6'). Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted she and Assistant Superintendent Thompson visited each of the classrooms and physically moved and measured all desks. We can hold 20 students in our classrooms when we remove excess furniture. In the high school science classrooms and middle school, we could fit 24 students. Students would each have their own set of materials, including a charged Chromebook or similar. Elementary students would remain in their homeroom and specialists would travel to them. For secondary students, they would travel to multiple classrooms. Food service will offer bagged breakfast and lunch to those interested. There will not be the selection of hot food items where you go through the line and pick and choose.

### **During the Day**

If a student or staff member displays symptoms of COVID, they will be masked and brought to the secondary nurse's office (isolation station), and sent home. A review of all spaces was conducted to identify the best location for the isolation station, e.g., has close access to an exit, provides circulation, etc. A doctor's clearance or clearance by the school nurse will be required for students to return to school. On Monday, the DHHS released new guidance around which students/teachers need to be sent home, etc. That guidance was forwarded to the advisory group, and will be implemented into the Plan based on recommendations. Staff members will be required to follow the established procedures in Human Resources. In the case of a positive COVID test, notification will take place, per State requirements, and contact tracing will begin. Response varies based on tracing. As an example, if the positive test was a preschooler who is driven by a parent directly to school and

entered the preschool classroom with potentially 6 or 8 students would have a different response than a 10<sup>th</sup> grade student who took the bus and was in 7 different classrooms with 7 different groupings of students throughout the day.

### During the Day & Dismissal

Students will wash their hands with soap and water for 20 seconds periodically. When soap and water are not available, they will use hand sanitizer at the classroom station. Students will have a staggered dismissal to alleviate traffic caused by additional personal vehicles. The existing traffic issues during morning drop-off and pick-up are understood. The Administration is planning for a more robust number of cars in the road, and have had meetings with transportation, officers from Brookline and Hollis, and building leadership to identify different ways to alleviate the situation to the best of our ability. Students will bring their device home each afternoon to charge and complete homework, as necessary.

### **Remote Learning 2.0**

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

### Specifics

- Elementary

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

- Secondary

ROCK/CAV Block provided. Students log into Zoom following daily schedule. Practice to follow mini lesson. Homework assigned for all students whether in person or remote. Feedback provided in identified format. A group has been established to create videos and how-to sheets for teachers and students so that it is understood where that feedback can be found.

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

### **Health & Safety**

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

Targeted temperature checks will be conducted by the school nurse. There was discussion around universal temperature checks, and due to the asymptomatic nature of COVID-19 in children, the decision was made to move to a targeted model; students visiting the office, students returning from an absence (for any reason). Face coverings will be required when social distancing is not possible. It is believed, based on the set-up of the buildings and the class sizes we have do allow for physical distancing, but it is not possible to do that all the time. It is not possible to do that when you are in the hallway, at certain times in a classroom, on the bus. When you cannot maintain 6' of physical distancing, you will be required to wear a face covering. Dismissal times will be staggered. There will be reduced student movement. Hand sanitizer and wipes will be available in classrooms and common areas. The District has secured sufficient hand sanitizer, wipes, and PPE to ensure all classrooms have what they need to safely reopen.

### **Instructional**

Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug went over the plan for instruction. Before last year came to a close, there was an extensive review of the year of curriculum. There was an assumption that not all curriculum was able to be covered when we had to drastically jump into remote learning. In the professional development days that follow the school year, teachers began the process of identifying specifically what was not covered, and shared that, through their Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), with the next grade level/course. That work will continue. Collaboration time will be built in for teachers to discuss student progress. Development of enhanced remediation for struggling students will continue. There will be instruction in personal/public health measures provided for students. Where appropriate, instruction will be moved outdoors. Shared instructional materials and spaces will be eliminated. Elementary specials will take place in the homeroom classroom.

### **Technology**

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

### **Human Resources**

There will be restrictions in place on volunteers. Opportunities for volunteering would be open in some areas but not in others, e.g., reading to a class could be done remotely. There will be a continued need for some specific volunteer opportunities, e.g., assisting with physical distancing, monitoring of students in various locations. Staff development will be provided in evidenced-based public health practices and the use of digital tools. Videos and how-to documents will be provided for teachers as well as families for students who are in remote. Custodial responsibilities will be adjusted to include increased deep cleaning as well as shifting the hours for custodians to allow for maximizing sanitation during the school day. Professional development is being provided on what a sanitized classroom looks like and the appropriate tools for doing that. There is a mister in each of the buildings (2 at the high school). We have enough sprayers for each of the 2<sup>nd</sup> shift custodians to clean our classrooms at the end of each day with the hydrogen peroxide based product. As part of

the approved budget, there is an additional sub-nurse. That nurse would be directed where the need is across the 6 buildings. Out-of-state professional development for teachers will be prohibited.

### **Facilities**

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

### **Student Services**

Students will have increased socialization time. At an elementary school level, that could mean an additional morning meeting or additional recess. At the middle school it could be added advisory time or an extended outdoor lunch time, and at the high school it could be expanded CAV Block. Each school will further develop their social-emotional programming. The sub-committee discussed the need for social and emotional programming. This was a central component of the school year in 2019-2020 before we went into remote learning. The District adopted the Choose Love Program; the intent is to continue this work. The program also deals with issues of discrimination, racism, equity, and anti-discrimination. IEP/504 and student progress meetings will be held remotely. Staff will receive training in the research-based program Mental Health First Aid. The majority of staff at the middle school and a number of staff at the high school have been trained. It is not unrealistic to be able to train every single member of the Hollis-Brookline school system in Mental Health First Aid. Since it is a research based program, there are a number of hours that teachers have to accumulate in order to get the certification.

### **Food Service**

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

### **Extra-Curricular**

Guidelines are driven by the NHIAA and the tri-county league. There will be temperature checks for students and no mask requirement when engaged in strenuous physical activity. Students will bring their own water. There will be limited public attendance at games per guidelines established by the organizations. Parents will remain in their vehicle during student pick-up. There will be no access to locker rooms by opposing teams and limited facility use by outside groups. Any facility use would have to be approved by the Superintendent. Noted was that the Brookline before school program is currently running their summer program, and will continue to offer before and after school care in Brookline and Hollis. School sponsored overnight travel is suspended.

### **Transportation**

There will be routine daily sanitizing of buses. There are Federal regulations that limit some safety protocols being put in place on a bus, e.g., plexiglass.

Part of the conversation was do we offer bus service. It is not a requirement in the State of New Hampshire that high schools provide bus service. In having that conversation, the sub-committee thought about families that otherwise would not be able to get their students to school. What is being asked is if you have the ability to drive your child to school please do so. The desire is to have a situation where the students who are accessing the bus are students who do not have another means of transportation.

Face masks and use of hand sanitizer are required for bus travel. There will be assigned seating (allows siblings to sit together and for easy identification of where students were sitting in the event of an outbreak), and when possible, windows will remain open.

There is a detailed school year transition plan and the summary report. There are building level guidelines that are not in the SAU Plan because every building is different. The larger document identifies processes and procedures and makes recommendations to the buildings. They are minimum standards. Each of the buildings will develop their building level plans. Those plans will be vetted through the SAU leadership to ensure a level of consistency and that all health and safety measures are considered.

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

In the instructional sub-committee one of the first questions was how many students can we fit in a 900 sq. ft. classroom if social distancing requirements were in place. With 6' of separation we can fit 20 student desks in most of our classrooms. In some of our kindergarten classrooms we cannot based on the smaller size; however, the educational specifications are well below 20. We can fit 24 in middle or high school science classrooms. Furniture and carpets would need to be removed from many of our spaces.

Also considered was what does small group instruction look like. That would potentially look like an alternate setting that would require masks/face shields or plexiglass depending on the space.

A concern was viewing the board might not be ideal in that awkwardly configured 20 desks in the classroom, but it was something to consider.

How do we minimize transmission of the virus through surface contact? Do we go paperless? How do we manage classroom libraries, etc. In remote, there is no sharing of supplies other than with siblings. Each student would be required to have their own Chromebook or device. In a hybrid model every student has his/her own device with them at all times. We would minimize any shared supplies. She has asked the building leaders to discuss with their teachers the school supply list; what is reasonable for all students to have with them in order to complete the year of instruction. We also have to coordinate with the specialists in the elementary because if we are going to have the music teacher travel from room to room, we need to ensure the students have supplies needed for that music teacher as well. In-person, students can collaborate on Google Docs if they are 6' apart, but in the same space. We are closing shared spaces. In all of our buildings, we have to determine best practice for classroom libraries.

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

The recommendation for serving lunch is a classroom model combined with electronic lunch count. If students travel to the cafeteria to pick up food they can state their student ID number as opposed to punching it in themselves and touching that surface.

Under the heading of Facilities & Student Services, the committee looked at expanding the nurse's office to allow for greater isolation. They looked for spaces with increased ventilation. They looked at and were able to create separate isolation rooms, and are looking at different filters for the health office and related spaces to ensure best and clean airflow.

With regard to progress monitoring, the District began looking at students and their progress prior to the Extended School Year (ESY). That process will be repeated in September. The thought is that there is potential regression amongst all students, not just identified students, and there is the need to understand what the possible regression is across the board. The SAU is looking at utilization of a number of tools and assessments to get that information. The District is creating an expanded focused RTI time, separate from class time, to offer that remediation and Tier II support to all students who might need it.

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

## **PUBLIC INPUT**

*The audio recording of this portion of the meeting was inaudible (malfunctioned). Therefore, the following comments were captured through notes taken by members of the Board and Administration who were in attendance.*

*When a speaker provided remarks that were similar to those shared at other school district meetings, in an effort to capture as much public input as possible, the remarks were pulled from the minutes of those meetings.*

A letter written by Becky Balfour, 31 Van Dyke Road, Hollis:

*"Thank you for taking the time to read this, and other, letters of concern at this meeting. I'm Becky Balfour, 31 Van Dyke Road, Hollis and I am writing as a member of the community, a parent, coach and teacher.*

*Like many others, I have many concerns about the opening of school this fall. I am concerned for the safety of our students and staff alike.*

*According to the CDC, at the end of our February vacation, there were 14 cases of Covid 19 in six US states. Two weeks later, our district, and eventually the entire state of NH, went remote for the remainder of the school year.*

*Today, there are 57,777 new cases in the US compared to yesterday, making a total of 3,819,139 cases and 140,630 deaths, with 473 new deaths since yesterday, and almost half the states in the US recording over 40,000 cases, according to the CDC.*

*Our state has fared better than others during the Pandemic as we have sheltered in place, physically distanced ourselves from others, many have used masks and PPE and the state has been phasing in the opening of stores and activities over the past few weeks. Most stores and businesses are still requiring masks, physically distancing patrons and limiting the number of individuals in the buildings at a time. Some restaurants are offering outdoor dining and many are not allowing indoor dining due to the concerns over ventilation and the spread of Covid 19 aerosol transmission indoors.*

*Unlike many other schools in our area, the draft for opening schools in our district, as presented by the SAU, would fully open the building to staff and students without setting a limit on the number of staff and students in the building. The initial draft indicated that desks should be 3 to 6 feet apart. The CDC guidelines for those schools that were still open in late spring indicated that desks should be 6 feet apart.*

*I went to my classroom at the high school earlier this week to see the feasibility of following these guidelines. I had to remove all the tables in the room that I had used for collaborative learning, as well as a bookcase. I have a number of classes with rosters with 25 students per class, the maximum number allowed at the high school. All 25 desks were exactly spaced 3 feet apart and were spread out, wall to wall in the room with no margin for error. When students sit down, the desks will move and shift out of compliance. There isn't room for a teacher to move 3 feet apart from desk to desk and, with this configuration, I would have a small space in the front and center of the class where I am 4 feet away from my 25 students. Clearly, this arrangement is not ideal and I have one of the biggest rooms in the building.*

*If we follow the 6 foot spacing guidelines that epidemiologists recommend and that we are following everywhere in public; I can only fit 12 desks in my classroom. This means I can only have half of my students in class, during any given period.*

*I would like to know if the ventilation will be addressed before school starts? Any student, staff or community member that has ventured onto the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors of the building can testify to the issues with ventilation and air quality. In the spring and fall, students and staff swelter in hot classrooms.*

*I am concerned about our vulnerable students and staff who will attend school in the fall and risk being exposed to Covid 19 or bringing it home to vulnerable family members. I am worried about my colleagues who are young or middle aged but, due to their medical conditions, they have been told by their doctors that, due to their varying conditions, they have the same medical risks as the elderly. I'm worried about our staff who care for loved ones who are immunocompromised family members or live, as many of us do, in intergenerational homes.*

*I worry about deaths in our community due to our haste to reopen our schools too quickly. I have had to talk to my students a number of times, over my 21 years here at HB, about the untimely deaths of their peers and do not want to roll the dice that this may or may not happen this year to their peers, teachers or family members and these conversations will have to take place, along with the trauma that comes with them.*

*We need a plan to address these concerns and protect our staff, students and community members.  
Thank you for taking the time to read this."*

Kathy Leavitt, 2 Birch Hill Road, Brookline

Stated she was speaking for Kelly Zakar, MSN, Boston Children's Hospital, 5 Cider Mill Road.

*"Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft proposal for re-opening the schools in SAU41. Thank you to the task force and working groups that have contributed their expertise, time and talents in developing the roadmap to re-opening our school buildings."*

Kelly is a pediatric nurse practitioner, substitute school nurse, volunteer in both Brookline and the COOP districts, has children in the class of 2020 and a rising 9<sup>th</sup> grader.

The feedback she wished to provide focused on the health and safety needs of the students, teachers, and staff in the setting of on-site instruction. Specifically, daily symptom monitoring assessments for each child, teacher, and staff member prior to arriving at the physical local. Secondly, supporting the district's school nurses and their ability to manage the health needs of the students efficiently and safely.

*"First, there would need to be a mechanism for self-reporting the brief daily symptom monitoring assessment for each child prior to their arrival at the building or even getting on the bus. While the roadmap does not mention the need for teachers and building staff to complete this affirmation and symptom assessment, it is essential that they are included in this requirement. Each person; parent, individual student, teacher, onsite staff needs to attest whether or not they have any of the following symptoms:..."*

*"Also, they should attest to whether or not anyone in the house has tested for COVID-19 in the last 14 days. SNAP, which is the School Nurses health management software, has the capability to collect this information through the parent portal and has developed the ability for building staff to use it as well. This type of remote affirmation may also be done with a database program or Google form. It is too late to have the students provide the results of this monitoring when they arrive at school as you do not want the symptomatic students getting off the bus and entering the building to be screened by the nurse."*

*Secondly, and most importantly, is the district's ability and willingness to support their nurses who will be responsible for managing and mitigating the risk for their school and by extension the greater community. Currently, each school has 1 nurse. The middle school has 1 nurse and the high school has 2 nurses. It is important to note that the additional school nurse currently being hired, as bulleted in the Human Resources section of the roadmap, is the same district float position that was budgeted for the last academic year. This position was difficult to fill last year and substitute school nursing positions are difficult to hire for in general. The roadmap does not provide for the district adding any additional nursing support in response to COVID-19 pandemic. The plan for expanded healthcare offices in all schools with a separate location for potentially symptomatic students does not account for the nurse being able to monitor those students in the separate location."*

*According to data collected in SNAP, school nurses average 30-40 visits in the 6 hours of each school day. In each building there are at least 10 children who have medication or treatments administered during the day, and every diabetic student averages 4 visits to the school nurse per day. According to roadmap, nurses will be expected to conduct targeted temperature checks and provide clearance for all students returning to school after an absence. In addition to managing the responsibilities related to COVID-19, the school nurse must also continue to safely administer and document medications and treatments, evaluate students and adults sustaining injuries onsite in addition to communicating with parents regarding student illnesses and injuries. Can they do this; absolutely. School nurses have been able to multi-task and manage many complex health issues at the same time."*

*One of my greatest concerns is that a planned phase out of the SNAP health center Electronic Health Record (EHR) going forward at this time of rapid change and increased responsibilities for professionals. The district's professional nurses have already asked to postpone the transition for one additional year. The new PowerSchool health module has not been fully developed and the nurses have been advised that this module will not be fully functional until the end of this school year.*

*I have had the opportunity to view the webinar using an EHR to prepare and protect for the reentry during the COVID-19 crisis, which among other things details added tools to manage COVID-19 within SNAP. This is not the time for your nurses in the SAU to change their student health management from SNAP to a new module being released by PowerSchool.*

*Our nurses are going to be under considerable stress this fall with the proposed return to school under consideration. It is not fair nor safe to expect them to put their licenses on the line trying to implement a new documentation platform at this time. As a community and a district we should support them to work with systems that they already use and are proficient with.*

*As we move towards opening our schools September 3<sup>rd</sup>, we need to be thoughtful and have efficient planned approaches in place to manage the guidelines put forth in the SAU roadmap. These approaches must, in my opinion, include a systemic way of submitting and monitoring daily affirmations for COVID-19 symptoms and exposure screening. This approach must empower our school nurses to use the resources and tools available to them to manage the health and wellbeing of our students and communities without added burden. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share this feedback.”*

Kacie Petrin Ellis, 7 Smith Road, Brookline

Thanked the Board and Administration for the Plan stating her belief the option of in-person schooling is best. She spoke of studies done by the University of Oxford and Brown University relative to the effects of COVID-19 on children. She questioned if the Plan has been approved by the Union.

Cindy Ryherd, 150 Witches Spring Road, Hollis

Questioned if face coverings would be required if more than 20 students were seated in a classroom, given social distancing requirements, how the District would address students who have been tested for COVID-19, but have not yet received the results (given lengthy wait), and if equipment in Science labs would be shared.

The question was asked of whether substitutes would be offered a larger salary.

Heidi Foster, 68 Rideout Road, Hollis

Read from a letter written by Kelly Zakar, 5 Cider Mill Road, Brookline:

*“Dear Superintendent Corey, Assistant Superintendents Bergskaug and Thompson, and members of the Brookline, Hollis, and CO-OP School Boards, thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft proposal for reopening the schools in SAU 41. Thank you to the task force and working groups that have contributed their expertise, time, and talents in developing the “Road Map to Reopening our School Buildings.” My name is Kelly Zakar and I’m a pediatric nurse practitioner, a substitute school nurse, a volunteer in both the Brookline and CO-OP districts, and a mother to a child in the HB Class of 2020 and a rising 9th grader.*

*The feedback I wish to provide will focus on the health and safety needs of the students, teachers, and staff in the setting of onsite instruction. I would like to address the following:*

1. *Daily attestations (symptom monitoring assessment) for each child, teacher, and staff member prior to arriving at the physical school building daily.*
2. *Supporting the district's school nurses and their ability to efficiently and safely manage the health needs of our students.*

*First, their needs to be a mechanism for self-reporting the brief daily symptom monitoring assessment for each child prior to their arrival at the building or getting on the school bus.*

*While the Road Map does not mention the need for teachers and building staff to complete this daily symptom monitoring assessment, it is essential that they are included in this requirement. Each person (parent or individual student, teacher, onsite building staff) needs to attest to whether or not they have any of the following symptoms: fever or feeling feverish, chills, sore throat, new cough (not related to a chronic condition), muscle aches, shortness of breath, new onset of loss of taste or smell, and whether or not anyone in their household has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days. SNAP, the school nurses current health management software has the capability to collect this information through the parent portal, and has developed the ability for building staff to use this system as well. This type of remote attestation may also be done with a database program or a Google Form.*

*It is too late to have students provide the results of this symptom monitoring assessment when they arrive at school, as you do not want symptomatic students getting off the bus or entering the building to be screened by the school nurse.*

*Second, and most importantly in my concerns is the District's ability and willingness to support our school nurses who will be responsible for managing and mitigating the risk for our school, and by extension, the greater Hollis-Brookline communities. Currently, each elementary school has one nurse, the middle school has one nurse, and the high school has 2 nurses. It is important to note that the "additional school nurse currently being hired," as bulleted in the Human Resources section of the Road Map is the same "district float" position that was budgeted for last academic year. This position was difficult to fill last year, and substitute school nursing positions are difficult to hire for, in general. The Road Map does not provide for the district adding any additional nursing support in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic."*

Questioned was what the trigger would be that would result in returning to full remote learning.

Diane Pauer, 12 Westview Road, Brookline

Questioned the estimated costs associated with the Plan, and whether there is sufficient funding.

Judy McDaniel, 5 Quentin Drive, Brookline

Spoke of a teacher survey done this week. The questions asked and responses were as follows:

1. Given the plan that was emailed to families and faculty on 7/20, which of the following are you considering (79 responses):

Returning to teaching full time and in person as the plan describes: 65.8%  
Looking into other options: 34.2%

2. If you answered “looking into other options” above, please share the options you are considering. Check all that apply (51 responses):

Taking a leave of absence: 54.9%  
Applying for 504 accommodations: 78.4%  
Leaving your current position: 41.2%

Fred Hubert, 42 Westview Road, Brookline

Spoke of being disturbed by the numbers cited by Ms. McDaniels. He noted the Mason School District is returning to in-person instruction without the requirement for face coverings.

He questioned how the Plan would be rolled out and implemented, and whether the District intends to hire new teachers.

Tiffany Testa, 101 Mooar Hill Road, Hollis

Stated the District is running a deficit model in regard to Social Emotional Learning (SEL). We do not have the structure or the program for SEL or trauma informed instruction.

Stacey Baker, 25 Flint Pond Drive, Hollis

Questioned what in-person and remote learning would look like, e.g., whether all work would be approved.

She stated concern with the requirement for face coverings as well as the ability to bridge the needs of everyone, e.g., students and staff, so that we provide free choice for all.

Michelle St. John, 29 Orchard Drive, Hollis

Questioned how the District would accommodate the required review of electives, touched on the lost learning with regard to electives, and questioned the demands that would be placed on the teachers.

Ms. St. John spoke of the differing ages of the buildings and how HVAC would be addressed. Another question raised was with regard to student parking.

Caitlin Parikh, 8 Petersen Road, Brookline

Spoke of appreciation for the fact that, when possible, classes will be moved outdoors. She questioned if there would be a dedicated outdoor space equipped with covering, e.g., tent.

Aaron Penkacik, 133 Dow Road, Hollis

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

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

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

Sheila Mandragouras, 6 Barton Road (school nurse HBMS)

Spoke of the responsibility of the nurses to assess and determine whether or not a student can return to the school environment after being out for a period of time.

She questioned who would be responsible for cleaning of classrooms in between classes. Some of the classrooms are smaller than others and could not accommodate the number of students we have with social distancing.

Harold Cadman, 169 Depot Road, Hollis

Spoke of testing occurring in Florida and Texas commenting for every positive test they count it as 15.

Cindy Ryherd, 150 Witches Spring Road, Hollis

Remarked the statements made by Ms. McDaniels are alarming.

Heidi Foster, 68 Rideout Road, Hollis

Spoke of 20-25 classrooms serving meals in the classroom. She questioned if PPE would be provided, and if all staff would be provided with N95 masks. She spoke of ventilation, and questioned whether modifications to the HVAC systems would be able to be completed in time.

Fred Hubert, 42 Westview Road, Brookline

Stated his support of the schools and encouraged the District to complete a survey similar to that which was noted by Ms. McDaniels.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned recording instruction, and what the trade-offs would be of resorting to what we know, e.g., in-person instruction.

He stated the desire to be provided with accurate information with regard to the percentages cited by Ms. McDaniels.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock commented once a parent makes the choice for their child to participate remotely, it is going to be more difficult should the desire be to move to in-person instruction. She questioned if it is accurate to state the Administration is going to look at times to do that. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated that to be her current assessment.

Superintendent Corey spoke of the question of what is looked for in terms of outcomes. He commented on the graduation ceremony that occurred this year and how one of the students had brought up the fact that the class had gone through 911. If we all think back to 911, it was a very traumatic event that changed us all. This same group that had been through 911 had just had their senior year taken away by a pandemic. That same group has prom tomorrow night. They are getting everything, but they are getting everything differently. That would be his goal by the end of this year; that the students get as much as we possibly can deliver academically, but that is not the only priority. Part of the lesson students are learning is resiliency. That is one of the foundations of our country. There are many historical events, good and bad, that have taught us and shaped us. What he is looking for is as normal an experience as it possibly can be for a group of students who are experiencing something that we hope no one experiences again.

In the midst of that, is to deliver quality math, science, English, history, and all of our specials. We have an outstanding staff, and they have always stepped up to the plate. They are nervous; we are all very nervous. That is a natural emotion. As we get closer to the date, that emotion will become even more difficult. If you look at some of the comments by the experts, all of us, whether students or adults, have been running at a stress level pretty close to maximum. At no point have we come down yet. What we are doing now is going from a high point to ramping back up again. He reiterated he is looking to deliver as normal a year as he can, teach our children about resiliency and what makes us great as a country, and at the same time teach them that as a community we can overcome anything.

Member Whalen requested if the decision is made that students are remote and we cannot get them back in person, whether it be a quarter/semester, etc., that we make that information known to people so that can be weighed as part of their decision making process.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock noted the Administration would utilize all of the input provided when considering amendments to the plan before bringing it back to the Board for further discussion/action.

- Community Resolution on Racism

Superintendent Corey spoke of having received a resolution regarding racism, inclusion, and tolerance. He had been communicating with community members regarding the tragic events occurring across the country. At the same time, the energy of the Administration was being devoted to reopening. He noted the resolution includes the following language:

1. The SAU #41 school districts will make anti-racism and equity a strategic priority and denounce all forms of institutionalized racism by supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.
2. SAU #41 will render services from an outside consultant, approved by the boards, to evaluate and advise district administration and educators on their policies, practices, and procedures relative to race equity and inclusion.
3. Based on the consultation recommendations, the SAU #41 school districts will develop and release a plan to address the findings. These actions may include professional development, draft new or edit existing policies and procedures, and curriculum review etc.

Superintendent Corey remarked pretty much everything that is done as a SAU comes from the Strategic Plan. We happen to be finishing the five year plan in the midst of the pandemic. Anything that we will do as a long-term initiative goes in the Strategic Plan so that we can budget accordingly. Putting this into the Strategic Plan gives clear direction and notifies all boards and citizens of where the SAU is headed.

When discussing this with the group of citizens that brought it forward, part of the idea of utilizing a consultant came from him simply because right now the SAU does not have the bandwidth. Focus has to be on reopening schools. However, this issue is of great importance to him, and one he believes needs to be a strategic objective with a clear set of goals and guidelines.

Typically when an issue/project is included as part of the Strategic Plan, a review is done of what the cost will be, why we are doing it, what professional development we need, are there policies and procedures, etc.

He has spoken with the individuals who are working on this and supports what is trying to be done, but at the same time we all know the wording needs to be reviewed. At the Hollis School Board meeting on Monday and the Brookline School Board meeting on Tuesday, he was encouraged to seek a solid interpretation from legal counsel because the language/words are important.

The Board is not taking action this evening, but rather looking to gain input and understanding from the community so that we know how to move forward. We are not looking to start this tomorrow or delay it for months; trying to find a balance. The input received from the first two board meetings has provided a lot of thought and feedback to be able to work on this and bring it back to the Board in a form. Once again, people in the community who have heard this have reached out, some with expertise much greater than his, and have volunteered to assist in the process.

### **PUBLIC INPUT**

Joe Garruba, 28 Winchester Drive, Hollis

Spoke of having seen the presentation at the Hollis School Board meeting. He requested the language of the resolution be read into the record.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock read the proposed resolution into the record:

**“Hollis-Brookline Non-discrimination and Equity Initiative**

**WHEREAS** The American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians declares that institutionalized racism is a public health crisis;

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

**WHEREAS** The effects of structuralized racism is a known Adverse Childhood Event;

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

**WHEREAS** The district is committed to nondiscrimination;

**WHEREAS** Hollis-Brookline is an inclusive community;

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

**WHEREAS** Racial justice is the systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all.

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

**NOW THEREFORE**, may it be resolved that:

4. The SAU #41 school districts will make anti-racism and equity a strategic priority and denounce all forms of institutionalized racism by supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.
5. SAU #41 will render services from an outside consultant, approved by the boards, to evaluate and advise district administration and educators on their policies, practices, and procedures relative to race equity and inclusion.
6. Based on the consultation recommendations, the SAU #41 school districts will develop and release a plan to address the findings. These actions may include professional development, draft new or edit existing policies and procedures, and curriculum review etc.”

Diane Pauer, 12 Westview Road, Brookline

Noted the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District already has excellent model policies on all forms of discrimination including racism. Policy AC - Non-Discrimination, states that the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School District shall not discriminate in its education programs, activities, or employment practices on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, color, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, age, marital status, or disability. Also, there is currently a grievance procedure, Policy KED - Grievance Procedure for Alleged Discrimination, to address alleged violations of the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and

the Age Discrimination Act. Therefore, it is unclear to her why it would be necessary to expend limited time, energy, and resources to devise a solution that already exists. Additionally, she spoke of having heard mentioned that the schools are participating or utilizing the Choose Love Program curriculum.

It is also unclear to her why it would be necessary to use taxpayer dollars to hire an outside consultant to evaluate current district policies and practices that have been in place and served the district well for years. Moreover, it is unclear why the expenditure of taxpayer dollars to support programs, professional development, and school curriculum as it pertains to social issues such as diversity, equity, and inclusion is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds.

She is not against parents and guardians teaching their children about these important issues, but is uncomfortable utilizing taxpayer resources and valuable classroom instruction time at the expense of basic curriculum when a significant percentage of our students are behind/not proficient in these subject areas.

Aaron Penkacik, 133 Dow Road, Hollis

Read into the record comments made by Andrew Scott at the July 20, 2020 Hollis School Board meeting, which he agrees with:

*“Andrew Scott, 167 Proctor Hill Road*

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

*This increased sensitization is already happening organically. On Facebook, a U.S. Literature Curriculum teacher asked for community recommendations on BIPOC and LGBTQ literature to update the curriculum in the library. In addition, the official HBHS library account posted a long note about filling in her own knowledge and understanding gaps, and seeking to update the library accordingly.*

*We do not need to hire outside consultants. Our teachers are doing their jobs, and do not need to be told what to teach or how to teach from outside consultants.*

*The proposal uses the word racism or anti-racism 5 times, inclusion 5 times, equity or equitable 8 times. There was a time when we all had a pretty good idea of what those terms meant. For example, if you ask most Americans today what does it mean to be anti-racist, they would say something akin to the ideal espoused by Martin Luther King; that we are to be judged by the content of our character not the color of our skin, but this is not what the word means today. In our culture, of social justice via critical race theory is driving the cultural narrative. Critical race theory has very specific meanings to these words, which are not the same as what you might currently think. Before there is a vote on this initiative, please understand how these words are defined in our current cultural narrative and the implications of those definitions.”*

Mr. Penkacik stated “Don’t use taxpayer money to pay for outside consultants.”

Kathy Leavitt, 2 Birch Hill Road, Brookline

At last night's Brookline School Board meeting she commented no one is harmed by participating in diversity inclusion, and equity education. However, there is lasting, demonstrable harm from lack of diversity, inclusion, and equity education. To quote Doctor Angela Davis "It is not enough to be non-racist. We must be anti-racist." Current SAU41 policy does the legal bare minimum with antidiscrimination. This is not enough. As a teacher, one value she models for her students is being a lifelong learner.

Over the past 6 weeks or so a group in Brookline has been meeting to talk about racism in our small town; some we have witnessed, some that has been committed against our family members and neighbors. She commented we're mostly old so imagine how much further along our children could be with diversity, equity, and inclusion training. Imagine how clear their vision through a lens of equity. There is life outside Hollis and Brookline and we want our kids to join and shape that world. There is life inside Hollis and Brookline as well and we deserve a community that embraces diversity and equity and inclusion. We need to abandon this "I don't want to, and you can't make me" feeling for what is good for the community. Where better to learn the values of a community than in our community schools? It is not enough to say our values are learned at home, that should be good enough. We need diversity and equity education. Will some folks be uncomfortable with it; absolutely, but that doesn't mean that our black, indigenous, people of color, children, neighbors, family members and friends should continue to bear the burden of systemic racism. We do no harm in educating our kids in diversity, inclusion, and equity. We do real lasting harm ignoring the need for anti-racism education.

John Jacob, 9 Farm Pond Lane, Hollis

Spoke of hearing a lot about institutionalized racism. He looked up what that meant; systemic racism. That means embedded in the core of your values that you are a racist. That is what that term means. He is trying to understand what it is we are trying to say with that in the resolution. He can provide examples of systemic racism. He is proud to say that his dad stood against the Klan in the '60s and in the '50s in Mississippi and Louisiana and received death threats. He knows from their stories what systemic racism is. That is a fine example and teach that example. All throughout the '40s and '50s there was horrendous housing policies. There is a great book called the Color of Law that talks about this. Teach that. That is a lot of systemic racism. He sees that example. The war on drugs today is a fine example of systemic racism. Teach that. The saddest example in 2005 there were roughly just under 290,000 deaths (all reasons) for all black people. The same year there were 440,000 aborted babies to blacks. That is the most systemic racist thing he can think of. He stated his hope that is taught too.

Pam Hicks, 8 Maple Knoll Drive, Hollis

Stated the desire to continue reading the statement made by Andrew Scott noting there are people in the community who have different opinions than this strong viewpoint that does get really pushed down our throats. It is ripping our kids apart. We have a great school system here. We have great teachers. The anger and what we are hearing come through is not okay. She has a child in the middle school, and commented if you knew what was going on social media you would be putting your efforts into dealing with how people treat each other not about racism instilling all of this hatred.

*"A website that aims to be non-political while using primary sources to accurately define and comment on the definitions can be found at [www.newdiscourses.com](http://www.newdiscourses.com). Click on social justice encyclopedia and look up the key words. It opened my eyes to a lot of things that I do not understand. I think the School Board and the community will be surprised if they too take the time to research the current meanings of these words. Clearly defining these words should be an important part of this process before any vote. In summary, I'm asking the Board to not use taxpayer money on outside consultants.*

*Any outside consultant will be well versed in social justice via critical race theory. Before voting on a proposal like this, I'm asking the board to please research more fully what these terms mean within the context of critical race theory in our current cultural moment. Thank you."*

Ms. Hicks commented last night at the Brookline School Board meeting a comment was made that they can do the math, but they can't co-exist in a work group. The last time she checked we had some pretty great kids, kids that graduate and go on to careers and school. That wasn't okay. We have a great community and tons of people. Her daughter said she didn't use to see color, and now she does. We're wrecking our school system with this stuff, and I hope you all will really do your homework before you push this in.

Maria Nardi, 46 Westview Road, Brookline

Spoke of the need to look at the wording. Anti-racism doesn't mean what it used to mean. It is important to understand the definition. It is basically saying we are racist whether we know it or not. In this community, she does not see racism. She has asked people. She is not afraid to talk about it. She called a friend of hers in town who happens to be black and asked what is going on. They don't see an issue here. She has talked to a number of people who have said there is no issue here. She questioned why we are trying to fix something that is not broken. She knows that our children in town like each other, respect each other, and they don't see color. What is written in this Anti-Defamation League curriculum is that we now start to have to put people in groups. These are types of people now instead of just people. This really has nothing to do with MLK's work, and we all know that. She does not understand what is happening in this country. This is really not where we want to go. We are going to actually cause the children to become racist. She read a quote from Professor Gad Saad (sarcasm) "I have a dream that one day my children will be judged on immutable traits that are perfectly irrelevant. I have a dream that the ethos of individual dignity is rejected for the liberating power of tribal membership. I have a dream that merit-based thinking will soon be replaced by racist bigoted and discriminatory practice cloaked in the robe of social justice."

Harold Cadman, 169 Depot Road, Hollis

The resolution appears to have been prompted by the recent murder of George Floyd in Minnesota and the resulting protests led by the BLM organization. Although he can certainly get 100% behind the statement Black Lives Matter, the fact of the matter is that the BLM organization itself does not honestly represent the statement black lives matter as their agenda is completely different. He stated the desire to draw the distinction here and now. He is 100% behind the statement black lives matter, but is also diametrically opposed to the organization BLM. BLM is led by three self-described, highly trained Marxist communist activists who espouse two very troubling principals for the BLM organization. According to their own website, they seek to destroy the western concept of the nuclear family and to defund the police. This agenda is in direct conflict with any attempts to enhance and protect the lives of the black community. A major component of the BLM organization is a group called Antifa, made up primarily of white militant anarchists provocateurs. These provocateurs instigate violence and vandalism during BLM protest marches and those who would normally be peaceful protestors would then be caught up in the chaos and begin to participate in the violence and destruction themselves.

Many black experts say that the destruction of the nuclear family is creating all the violence and suffering within urban black communities. The one thing that is keeping gang violence in these communities somewhat in check is the local police force. It seems the BLM organization is not here to help the black community but rather to further undermine it.

If nothing else, the point he wishes to make to the Board is that if you go outside the community for expert advice, do not hire consultants with any association with the BLM organization. They are Marxist communists with an agenda that is completely destructive.

Senator Melanie Levesque, 2 McDaniels Drive, Brookline

Stated her support of the resolution. It is a resolution not a policy. It is a statement, an expression of an opinion and intention that we are making and one that many members of the community are asking for.

This resolution came from members of our community, in part due to the events of the past 6 weeks, starting with the death of George Floyd. That was the catalyst. This event unearthed disparities that have long been present in the areas of education, the workplace, and law enforcement. It is up to each of us to be a part of the solution. This resolution is a first step.

Senator Levesque commented she has lived in Brookline for almost 30 years and New Hampshire for most of her life. She served on the School Board, as a secretary for the Girl Scouts, is a trustee of her church and a Deacon. She is involved. She is part of the community, and she has heard people speak of the community like she is not part of it. At this time, when our community, our children, our people are calling out enough, we've seen people that have been killed before our eyes without any type of resolution, nobody is blamed for this.

Cindy Ryherd, 150 Witches Spring Road, Hollis

Stated support of the resolution commenting she has a child who is not Caucasian who attends this school district, and she can tell you that regardless of whatever policies we might have her child is not aware they exist. Even if she knew she would never ever come forward. That is not what students do. As a parent she does not find out about it until much later. If you believe racially insensitive things or really truly inappropriate things don't happen in our school district/towns you are mistaken. They do. It is just that we are so predominantly white you don't hear about them. They are happening and they are hurtful. Most kids will be fine and recover, but does she wish she hadn't had to go through that, of course. Does she ask questions like why a black man could be murdered live in front of all of us and everyone watch it, and nothing happens, and she has to respond that she does not have the answer to that. We need this training. If we have the expertise in our towns who can be open-minded then she is fine with that. It is needed.

Susan Homola, 15 Mendelssohn Drive, Hollis

Believes Hollis Brookline has the resources, common sense, and professional skills, and are already teaching our children about equality, race, tolerance, and inclusion. She does not understand the need to have something be another aspect of the Strategic Plan. It sounds like it already is, on multiple levels. To address it when situations arise, she believes there are a lot of resources and protocols in place that can help that. We have mental health professionals and counselors on staff and protocols that deal with that. It doesn't mean that situations won't come about, it means that we already have the means of addressing it already in place. It sounds as if that is the point of considering hiring an outside consultant, to tell us that things aren't adequate enough.

Commented when she was 13 her Mom moved her and her siblings from Massachusetts to inner-city Phoenix. She went to a school that had gang violence, drugs, and bars on the windows. Every day she was threatened

with being beat up because she didn't look like anybody else in the school. She was actually spit on, on the bus. She knows what that feels like. She knows what real discrimination feels like on a personal level. It is because she has this perspective and her children have attended schools across the nation, that she can say she has a real world perspective and can objectively say that Hollis Brookline actually has a great system. They have a current system. They aren't afraid to have these conversations; our community is not afraid to have these conversations, we're already having them.

She cautioned everyone that it is really easy, if living in a Hollis bubble, to not realize what the rest of the world looks like. We are doing pretty damn good. Our staff has the professionalism, the current competency, and more importantly the common sense to already be doing what they are doing. She does not believe an outside agency is required.

Caitlin Parikh, 8 Petersen Road, Brookline

Has resided in Brookline for 3 years having moved here for the schools. She spoke of her support of the resolution on non-discrimination. She grew up in Vermont in a really small town a lot like Brookline, and was taught she was not racist, being racist is bad, Vermont is not a racist place. That is what she learned in school and at home. At age 18 she left to go to college believing she was not racist. It took her a while to realize a lot of her world views and the way she was interacting with people of color was racist. She didn't know what she didn't know. She believes a lot of people are in the situation where we just don't know what we don't know, and that is why an outside consultant is really critical. We need someone with expertise who is outside of the bubble of Hollis and Brookline.

She wishes someone had started having these conversations with her when she was young. There is a lot to learn, and she believes we owe it to our children to make the schools a fair place for everybody.

Michelle St. John, 29 Orchard Drive, Hollis

Thanked the previous speaker for expressing her views. She noted New Hampshire is the 3<sup>rd</sup> whitest state in America (94% white), and stated her support of the resolution. She provided a copy of an article "Why White Students Need Multi-Cultural and Social Justice Education". It was written by Dr. Sheldon Eakins, Founder at the Leading Equity Center, and the host of the Leading Equity Podcast. She summarized "*What multi-cultural education can teach our white students; understanding their own cultural and ethnic background, studying implicit bias in everyday language, examining representation in curriculum and beyond....*" We can look and see what we are teaching our kids and improve upon that. If we need guidance, so be it. "*Understanding and recognizing privilege and dismantling racism*" sometimes we teach our students how to be kind to others, embrace diversity, and respect differences. We can go beyond that by teaching our white students how to be anti-racist actively and do their part to support advocacy towards social justice and reform. The foundation for teaching our students how to engage in these practices actively is by helping students understand their white racial identify and positionality in society. From there, students may have a better understanding of the need for a multi-cultural approach in education and what they can do to find their voice and role in creating a socially just society.

Joe Garruba, 28 Winchester Drive, Hollis

Spoke of having done research on some of the information that came out of the meeting Monday night. He looked into the racial bias educational programs of the Anti-Defamation League, which was proposed to be brought in as an outside consultant. He spoke of the type of curriculum changes that can be expected to be recommended if adopting the proposed resolution. He shared some of the content he found at the ADL website. An article titled “How Should I Talk About Race with My Mostly White Classroom?”, attempts to downgrade the concept of personal responsibility and promote group and racial identity in its place. In a section titled “Clarify That the Goal is not to be Colorblind”, the ADL says “There are many white people who believe the best way to eliminate racism is to not talk about it and not notice racial differences at all (i.e. be “colorblind”)...” “It may also be a way to avoid dealing with discussions of race because they are uncomfortable.”

Mr. Garruba stated he is not uncomfortable. He wants to teach his children to form opinions of others based on their actions and their efforts not their racial identity. This is surely the way forward to a more just world. More importantly, however, a public education is intended to teach our children the fundamental scholastic disciplines not political theories. The ADL recommends teaching the concept of white privilege and it defines it as “unearned and often unseen or unrecognized advantages, benefits or rights conferred upon people based on their membership in a dominant group beyond what is commonly experienced by members of the non-dominant group.”

Donna Levasseur, 70 Depot Road, Hollis

Thanked all who have done the heavy lifting in order to get the schools open in September.

She spoke specifically to the potential of hiring an outside consultant to provide professional development for our teachers, and having input on what specific curricular potentially could be taught to our students in the district. As a person in favor of local control, she is against hiring an outside consultant. She questioned the specific philosophical background of the consultant, e.g., will the subject matter be taught from a position of a social justice warrior, will terms from critical theory be introduced into our classrooms. Inserting words like systemic, implied, or institutionalized in front of the word racism carries very specific meanings. These words accuse our society, culture, and way of life as being wrong. How awful it would be to teach our children they are racist but do not know it.

She spoke of having attended the Hollis School Board meeting, and of a resident who stated that our country was founded on white supremacy. It was not. She spoke of her faith in the School Board and Administration, and that not one of them believes that our country was founded on white supremacy.

She stated the hope that if and when a curricular is developed, professional teaching materials, policy, and a resolution created, that great care and thought will be put into choosing materials that are consistent with the values in our community.

Marie Ramas, 9 Colburn Lane, Hollis

Thanked the Board and Administration for having the conversation and community members who are interested and concerned for the wellbeing of their children.

She shared her experience growing up in New Hampshire as a Haitian American young lady; never had a black teacher or a person of color teach her until she was in college. She wanted to make people understand the difference between discrimination, which is an interpersonal judgement and prejudice particularly about a person or persons and equity, which is a systemic evaluation of structures, policies, and hierarchy in the way organizations run.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, as of 2017, 8% of the teachers in America were black. Also, people of color have a higher rate of being disciplined within our schools and at a harsher rate.

She has a 12-year-old son in the middle school, a 9-year-old daughter, and a little one that was ready and eager to go to kindergarten. They need to ask her “Why is it that, in history class, I don’t see anybody that looks like me? We’re Haitian right, why don’t they teach that there were Haitians that actually fought in the Revolution?”

Tiffany Testa, 101 Mooar Hill Road, Hollis

Remarked what she loves about a democracy is that in a democracy we all have a voice to share our opinions. We know in a democracy not everyone knows how to use their voice well or feels empowered or brave, but they will let us know their opinions. What she does not love about a democracy is that often times the weight of expertise is not given to the voices. That is true especially in education. If she were a medical or psychiatric doctor, she might have some weight here. As an educator she might not have as equal a weight.

There are some things that are non-negotiables as educators; we are civil servants and we are here to serve our kids, and we realize that our kids need to figure out how to have important conversations around issues that affect their lives. Now that doesn’t call us racist, that doesn’t say that we are not empathetic and caring and loving and an amazing town. In some ways, this Town is working at a deficit. Last night, as part of a school project, she interviewed a high school student going into their senior year, and asked them to tell her a time when they had discourse and engaged in conversation with students and adults around issues. There were two examples. Following a suicide in town, the Principal and Guidance Counselor spoke to the class.

Scott Grenier, 1 Senter Drive, Brookline

Spoke in support of the non-discrimination and equity initiative stating his belief it is an important initiative to undertake as soon as possible. While there is a cost associated with the consultant’s review of our existing policies, that cost is outweighed by the cost of litigation we are exposed to by not having completed that review. Any judgements against us would likely require us to complete the review that is being requested today.

He also believes that proof of such a review is likely to soon be a requirement for school districts who are accessing state or federal funds. It is a trend that is going on across the business community right now. It is understood to be a risk for a potential discrimination lawsuit. If we wait for the requirements to be established we will be competing with many other school districts for the same pool of consultants, and those consultants will become unavailable or unaffordable.

He believes it important to begin this work as soon as possible because it is the right thing to do. We’re not looking for a problem here, a problem exists. The current non-discrimination policy is the bare minimum required by law. Our mission statement and student handbooks do not include a commitment to inclusion or embracing diversity as values so there is work to be done.

We need an outside consultant to complete the review because systematic racism is the system that taught us. We understand that our intentions are not racist, so we assume our policies are not racist, but racism is defined by the person who is experiencing the racism not by our intentions.

A full review of our policies and curriculum is required to ensure we are providing a welcoming environment for learning for all students, and the time to do it is now.

Mark Ledoux, 64 Dow Road, Hollis

Congratulated the Board on conducting a very timely meeting, and on the efforts to secure as positive reopening of the campuses. He believes the resolution before the Board should be addressed a little more thoughtfully as it relates to the premises on which it was created. As the Chairman of the Selectboard, he would be witness to systemic racism. In his 15 years on the board, he has not witnessed systemic racism. He also pointed out that our police force is one of only 15 in the entire State that has the independent national certification CALEA. What they do is make really sure that these issues that we are hearing about dealing with race, gender, equity, outcomes, etc., are dealt with in a policy manner and recurring training. You already have the language. You need to review it. He stated agreement the district does not need to go outside. There is a wealth of knowledge in this combined community; people engaged with running multi-national companies. The bottom line is the fact that this conversation being had is positive. He stated his belief we really ought to make a firm statement for both communities; we will not abide racism under any circumstance found anywhere within our communities.

David Werner, 148 Ridge Road, Hollis

Moved to Town 3 years ago. In his professional life, he was a trial attorney in California. For 42 years he had the benefit of conflict morning, noon, and night. He got tired of it and came here because it was so peaceful and calm. Then all of a sudden a bomb gets dropped on his peaceful content life, which has this resolution at the heart of it. He did not wish to get involved in a discussion other than to make certain observations.

There are three sides to this conflict. One side seems to be what was voiced by the first speaker; a legitimate interest in trying to deal with a serious problem. He spoke of having a serious aversion to racism. As part of his practice he sued and got a lot of punitive damage awards for racism. He does not tolerate it. If it is here in this town show him where it is, and he will step on it.

There is a group of people that are in favor of a legitimate discussion, but then there is another that he would just call ideologists, that have a political agenda that has nothing to do with bringing peace to this community, but it has to do with fomenting their own ideology.

One of the speakers cited Angela Davis. She is an avowed communist that has called for the destruction of the United States Government. He attended her classes at U.C. Berkeley. She was a wonderful teacher, but that is her goal.

The third group are parents who are simply saying there is no racism here, we don't get it, but mostly we don't want our kids subject to an outside political ideology that will brainwash them and tell them things that are not true.

That to him is what the conflict is. It doesn't just affect the schools; it affects the community. It is something that is dividing this community. He asked the Board to make resolving this conflict a priority.

Tania Vera, 6 Nightingale Road, Brookline

Spoke in support of the Hollis-Brookline Non-discrimination and Equity Initiative. When looking in this community, it is predominantly white. She knows 13.4% of America is black. When she looks around and doesn't see that many students, families, or teachers represented here, there are factors that are playing into that. Her interest in this is to assess what, if anything, can be done here. There are a bunch of questions in her mind that she believes need to be asked.

It is clear to her from listening to those who have come up to speak, she does not believe there is any ill intention in anyone's heart. Don't look at just the base number; look around, our demographics do not reflect the rest of this country. She also knows students of color get disciplined at a higher rate, and it is more severe. She is unaware if the district has those statistics, but would like to see them if available.

These are the kinds of things she knows happen. When she looks at the Town list she sees language there that makes her brain explode. She avoided the groups for 12 years because she knows that she is uncomfortable listening to that language. She has friends that have children in these systems, and they have been called the "N" word, and that is a personal level.

Fred Hubert, 42 Westview Road, Brookline

Believes members of the Board and Administration are all leaders; they are hired or elected to lead. They are not expected to follow and to jump on a bandwagon. He is hopeful anything they do is not about following a wave and jumping on a bandwagon. When Assistant Superintendent Thompson spoke of the Choose Love Program, it sounded to him that we already have this in place. It talks about racial equity and non-discrimination. We are already doing that. Another speaker talked about the policies that are already in place.

He runs an outdoor flag football league in the community and hires high school kids as referees. For a lot of them it is their first job. Some are people of color. One of them posted to social media, what's going on here, this is crazy, that's not happening here. For practices, they currently have to be in small groups. One of the groups was present tonight and a few people of color were in that group. He called them over and asked them if it is happening here. The response was no coach. He has some rising seniors who aren't people of color and asked them. The response was no coach, it is not happening in our community. We know that it happens in other places, we know it is not happening here.

He pointed out an instance he observed of that happening; while at a playoff game this past fall, one of their players was called a racial slur. The team didn't shrug it off, it was outraged. They had to call a time out and settle the kids.

Brooke Arthur, 74 Ridge Road, Hollis

Thanked the Board for listening to all of the speakers, and expressed her gratitude to Superintendent Corey for his input. Having had a role in developing of this dialogue, she stated it is not a political agenda for her. She is not a political person. It is born out of ongoing dialogue that she has had with administrators for years. Recent national events made it so that people started listening, and provided an opportunity for it to be talked about in a way it hasn't before.

She has shared with the Board and Administrators information on some professional academic organizations that link the necessity of racial equality inclusion efforts in their reopening plans.

She shared a quote from Wangari Maathai, the first African American woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize. She stated "In the course of history, there comes a time when humanity is called to shift to a new level of consciousness, to reach a higher moral ground. A time when we have to shed our fear and give hope to each other. That time is now."

Diane Pauer, 12 Westview Road, Brookline

Stated public schools supported by public tax dollars must focus attention on the mission of educating students in the basics and leave these discretionary teachings to families. As a former Chair and member of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative Budget Committee, it occurred to her that since this initiative and any related funding was not identified as an expenditure within this current operating budget, it would most likely be deemed as new spending, and therefore would not be permitted under NH RSAs. She suggested that be looked into.

Tiffany Testa, 101 Mooar Hill Road, Hollis

Spoke of having left off in her remarks discussing an interview she had to do for a class for a student that is an upcoming senior. She asked that student when they had engaged in structured dialogue with an adult within the building that knew them well and with their peers. The student responded there were two instances, one of which was an occurrence when they listened to a Principal and Guidance Counselor. The other was in response to the Parkland shooting. They didn't have dialogue; they were able to walk. She questioned if the student could think of an organic time as she has heard a great deal about organic relationships being built where kids can build the skills of having critical conversations. The student said no. We can't leave it to organic relationship building.

NEASC has said everywhere you look the number one indicator of success for kids is for an adult to know them well. Our kids are going into a multi-cultural world, and it is not in accordance with the demographics of our Town. They need the skills.

She spoke of the inorganic relationships among coaches and their players, which are so important. She knows her children build those relationships and are fortunate for it. When you look at the way kids will respond to another town in defense of their peers, it is really strong. She questioned how they defended the one that is in the peer group when on the bus and someone is touching your afro. We need to train our kids in critical conversations so let's make that a part of our curriculum.

Charlotte Troddyn, 32 Hideaway Lane, Hollis

Commented on having been at home watching the meeting, and got angry enough that she got in her car and drove over. Watching this from home brought a lot out in her; there is a room full of white people talking about how we have no racism in our town. We can't know what we don't know. She stated concern there are so many people in our town .... **audio inaudible...** to educate our kids and give them more tools unless we are just too shaken when they come home. She has one of those students in her family who she thought, living in the household that he grew up in, would have had the tools to know what to say and he did not. They all came home upset about this. She stated her full support of giving our school the support to give our kids everything they need to go out into this world to fight the fight they need to fight, to support every single student in HB regardless of skin color, background, or family upbringing.

John Jacob, 9 Farm Pond Lane, Hollis

Also lives in Greenville, SC simultaneously. The demographics of Greenville, SC are quite different than Hollis, NH. He lived most of his life in the south. He moved here in 2000 and is 55 years old. He noticed the whiteness of New England. It is not just Hollis, NH, it is New England. It has nothing to do with the towns and the policies, it has everything to do with the mathematics of the population. In his neighborhood in SC, he has neighbors of all colors; it is perfect harmony. He did nothing different selecting the home than he did when he bought his home in Hollis. The town did nothing differently for him either. It is pure mathematics on population demographics. That is all it is.

He understands the notion that people say we don't know what we don't know, and it is cultural ignorance; ignorance meaning that we have just not experienced it. He understands people saying that. Cultural ignorance due to a lack of experience is not racism. There is no malice in that. Racism is a dirty thing that has a dirty history that is full of hate and malice, and to try to bring it to a resolution without making that point very clear that we are educating our cultural differences and not accepting the fact that we have systemic embedded cultural racism in this community is a distinction that needs to be made.

Michelle St. John, 29 Orchard Drive, Hollis

Followed up on the comments of the previous speaking noting to her, he stated the fact why multi-cultural education is 100% relevant in white schools. It is true that we don't know what we don't know. The students brought this to the attention of the Superintendent. The students want this. The students want to be better people and better prepared for when they enter society. She questioned how many of these students are going to stay in Hollis-Brookline and how many are going to move to other areas. They need the tools. They need to be better citizens in where they live.

Superintendent Corey also mentioned resiliency and what makes us great as a country. We are great as a country when we include everyone. That resolution also states diversity and inclusion. That could mean students with disabilities, students who are on the LGBTQ spectrum, students of color. We are all different and we should learn how to respect each other and our differences and support each other. She wholeheartedly believes whatever tweaking needs to happen, this needs to happen for the future of Hollis Brookline and those kids who are going out into the world.

Joe Garruba, 28 Winchester Drive, Hollis

Read the definition the ADL, the potential consultant, gives for white privilege "unearned and often unseen or unrecognized advantages, benefits or rights conferred upon people based on their membership in a dominant group beyond what is commonly experienced by members of the non-dominant group." Any achievement that is made, no matter how much hard work is put into it, that accomplishment, if it is by a white student, could potentially be the result of an unseen or unrecognized advantage. Any weakness or shortcoming by a black student could potentially then become the result of white privilege. This logical mindbender is what we are talking about teaching to our children as curriculum. He wants to teach his children that they should be proud of their accomplishments based on their efforts, and that their failures are opportunities that they can learn from. He does not want the logical concept of white privilege taught as if it is a fact.

Since the definition includes unseen or unrecognized advantages, all differences and outcomes are attributable to race rather than an individual's hard work, talents, or determination. Do we want to teach this to our children as fact? The article on the ADL website goes on to describe a method to get students to accept the concept of white privilege "If students are going to engage in conversations about race that privilege has to be on the table." Here again, the proposed curriculum is going far beyond facts in history. He does not want his children

taught to feel guilty for things that happened long before they were born. This concept lies in the face of logic. We cannot teach our kids political theory.

Maria Nardi, 68 Hideaway Lane, Hollis

As a physician scientist and an expert in equity, a person who served on the board of the American Academy of Family Physicians, and a current board member for the New Hampshire Academy of Physicians, she can understand why her organization, which now represents almost 140,000 family doctors in this country who take care of the sickest of the sickest, made a public announcement that racism is a public health crisis. It is a crisis because day in and day out the physician scientists see the numbers, and day in and day out the educators see the numbers. There is a lower rate of succession from high school to college for people of color, period. We cannot deny the fact that Brown vs. Board of Education happened and said separate was equal. It was done for a reason. It was done particularly in order to keep privileged communities in a certain area in power. We have to acknowledge that. It is an ugly history. It is mean, it is awful, but that is our country. It is our country and our history. That is what makes us who we are as a nation. The best thing about being in America is that we were able to grow and change and be nimble. She is proud that after being here for 4 years that this community of concerned citizens understands the importance of being nimble, of responding to needs and assessments, and for doing that in an evidence-based way. Equity has nothing to do with personal thoughts or views. We all have bias, and we don't know what we don't know because we were just born with it. We don't know what we don't know because we have been taught.

She commented if all she sees throughout all of her education is white men then that is what she is going to believe is going to be positive.

Senator Melanie Levesque, 2 McDaniels Drive, Brookline

Commented it sounds like we have a lot of work to do. She is very much in support of the resolution. She reiterated it is not creating policy, but is stating an intent of our values. This is really the Board's document to work with now and make it one that we can all support. It is not so much a resolution about racism. We are not calling anyone a racist perse, but there are traits, things that happen that are inherently racist. She was not saying that they are here, but they are all over. This is not a resolution about racism, it is a resolution about our humanity and our commitment to understanding each other. Based on the conversations that we have been having today, we need someone to help us understand each other. We're being pretty hard on each other, and we don't need to be.

She requested the Board support the resolution, which is a declaration of our humanity, because it is never the wrong time to do the right thing.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock spoke of her appreciation of all of the input provided. Although she might not agree with all of the comments, she appreciates the courage and gumption that got people up to the microphone to share their feelings on the topic. It is a conversation that we need to continue to have.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned the will of the Board relative to deferring detailed discussion to a later date. Chairman Deurloo Babcock stated she would be comfortable leaving this for the Board to sit with and comment on at a later date if the Board is of the opinion that would be a more appropriate way to proceed.

Asked if the Board would have to act on this at the next meeting, Superintendent Corey stated it would not. The other two school boards have agreed with the approach of requesting a legal opinion. He spoke of the public comment provided at the different meetings. Time would provide him the opportunity to review all of the feedback and be able to bring it back to the Board for its discussion.

Vice Chairman Solon questioned if action on the resolution would be taken at the SAU Governing Board level or at individual district levels. Superintendent Corey remarked because it governs the students in the district, it is a district decision. The SAU Governing Board could affirm those decisions.

Vice Chairman Solon stated he is not supportive of the language of the resolution particularly in the context of being put forth as a resolution. He believes it to be premature for it to be sent to legal counsel until the Board weighs in on what it would potentially support, if supporting anything. Superintendent Corey noted the Brookline and Hollis School Boards have requested the resolution be forwarded to legal counsel to obtain clarification on the difference/implications of a resolution versus policy. Vice Chairman Solon indicated he would not object to that.

Member Williams stated she could not support the use of an outside consultant without understanding the cost and what is desired to be gained.

Superintendent Corey stated no determination has been made as to the use of an outside consultant. He had reached out the Anti-Defamation League as it is a resource. He is not committing the district or the boards to any fees at this time.

He believes it to be something that could be looked at internally. There are individuals present tonight who have already volunteered to assist in that process. It may be something we can tackle. His concern is simply around the issue of bandwidth as reopening has to be the number 1 priority.

Member Williams spoke of comments made that this doesn't exist in our community noting it does not take a lot of research to see that it does. She has a child at the high school, one at the middle school, one at the upper elementary school, and one at lower elementary, and just talking to a couple of her own and a few other students, it is a real problem. How we interpret and view things may be different, but, to her, diversity is not at all about race, it is about what makes us different. It can be our socio-economic status, religion, politics, etc. Diversity is something that should be celebrated. She believes we have a big problem here, and agrees with the desire for additional information on the meaning/implication of a resolution. She fully supports some of the intentions, but needs to understand so much more, which is why she cannot support any of this as it is currently written.

Member Brown spoke of wanting to be protective of the Administrative staff. She is concerned about bandwidth. We've always placed a lot on our administrative staff, and there have been very few times she has heard them raise their hand and say that they had too much on their plate. She is interested in this topic, but feels she has too much going on in her brain, which is under a lot of stress due to COVID. We have been in this very high stress state now for 4 months. She feels like we need to get the kids back in the building because if we don't get them back in the building we are going to have serious negative consequences to women in general. We're going to take a big hit in the workplace.

When we can kind of turn to another issue, we can have the bandwidth to have an intelligent and calm conversation and figure out what the next move is whether it is going with this or another organization or using our internal resources. She reiterated there have been very few times when she has heard the administrative staff say we don't have the bandwidth to take this on. She is hearing that loud and clear right now, and she wants to come to their protection and advocate for them, and try to at least move this into a state where it is a

better season to have this conversation. That might be a matter of weeks or months. We are going to have to pivot to that when it becomes a time when we are not under quite so much stress.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock commented it was about the March timeframe when we had our first meeting of Portrait of a Cavalier, which was a meeting designed to talk about what we think a Cavalier, a person who graduates from our PreK-12 district, will graduate with. We were in the middle of that work when COVID struck. It is important to keep in mind that we are in a crisis right now. We have two crises going on because we definitely have a crisis related to race. We need to consider how we go about this and we need to support our Administration in that.

She would like to see the Board act on this and move forward. She is also sensitive to the fact that our students asked our Principal for action on this. It is important for us to keep that in mind as we move forward. She is uncertain if the right direction is an outside consultant or a group, but does believe we have to do this. She simply believes we need to breathe and get our kids back in the building. She understands some feel that means that we need to get them back in the building and fix this too. We have a problem that needs fixing, and problems take a long time to fix.

Member Whalen suggested tabling action on the proposed resolution until the October timeframe. This clearly has struck a nerve in our community. There is more discussion regarding this than there was about reopening our schools. There is the need for further discussion. It is important and needs to be done thoughtfully, deliberately, and carefully.

Chairman Deurloo Babcock commented tabling would be an action, and the Board is not taking action on this. The discussion is whether or not it will appear on our agenda for next month. It will go through the agenda building process that is gone through every month where the Chair, Superintendent, and others will weigh in on it.

### **REPORT OUT BY PROCESS OBSERVER**

Vice Chairman Solon remarked, other than the fact that we ran well over the identified time, he believes it was productive. Having watched two previous meetings and participated in this and duplication and repetition, perhaps what can be learned from this is the forum for discussion like this might be something outside the board meeting environment where we have public interface, the tools, and the time to have the interaction that he believes the public seeks.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION BY MEMBER BROWN TO ADJOURN**

**SECONDED BY MEMBER WILLIAMS**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**7-0-0**

*The July 22, 2020 meeting of the Hollis Brookline Cooperative School Board was adjourned at 9:47 p.m.*

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_