

## **BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD**

**MAY 26, 2021**

### **MEETING MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Brookline School Board was conducted on Wednesday, May 26, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. at the Captain Samuel Douglass Academy.

Kenneth Haag, Chairman, presided:

Members of the Board Present:     Erin Sarris, Vice Chairman  
  Karen Jew, Secretary  
  Rebecca Howie  
  Alison Marsano

Members of the Board Absent:

Also in Attendance:                 Andrew Corey, Superintendent  
  Gina Bergskaug, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction  
  Bob Thompson, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services  
  Patricia Bouley, Principal, Captain Samuel Douglass Academy

---

### **SAU COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

- SAU 41 Compensation Sub-Committee
- SAU 41 Rent Evaluation Sub-Committee
- SAU 41 Health Insurance Study Group

Superintendent Corey noted the SAU Rent Evaluation Sub-Committee will conduct its work over the summer months, the SAU Compensation Sub-Committee will begin its work in August, and the SAU Health Insurance Study Group will conduct its work throughout the year.

Chairman Haag noted his commitments to the Facilities Study Committee and the School and Town Services Committee, which meet weekly over the summer.

Member Marsano spoke of a commitment she has during the month of August that will put her out of Town for 3 weeks. She stated a willingness to represent the Board on the SAU 41 Rent Evaluation Sub-Committee if able to do so remotely.

Vice Chairman Sarris stated a willingness to represent the Board on the SAU 41 Compensation Sub-Committee.

Member Howie volunteered to represent the Board on the SAU 41 Health Insurance Study Group.

***Chairman Haag announced the appointments as: Member Marsano to the SAU 41 Rent Evaluation Sub-Committee, Vice Chairman Sarris to the SAU 41 Compensation Sub-Committee, and Member Howie to the SAU 41 Health Insurance Study Group.***

## **AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS**

Superintendent Corey noted the Board would discuss the Unreserved Fund Balance (UFB); however, a vote is not required at this time. Additional information will be available for the June meeting as we near the end of the fiscal year.

## **CORRESPONDENCE/RESIGNATIONS/NOMINATIONS**

Superintendent Corey informed the Board of his nomination of Bridgette Combes for the position of 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at the Captain Samuel Douglass Academy (CSDA). Bridgette has her bachelor's in education from Green Mountain College and her Master in Specific Learning Disabilities from Rivier University.

**MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT THE SUPERINTENDENT'S NOMINATION OF BRIDGETTE COMBES FOR THE POSITION OF 5<sup>th</sup> GRADE TEACHER AT A MASTERS STEP 5 AND A SALARY OF FIFTY-ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED SEVENTY-SEVEN DOLLARS (\$51,777)**

**MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HOWIE**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**5-0-0**

Superintendent Corey informed the Board of his nomination of Jessica Coutu for the position of grade 5 Teacher at the CSDA. Jessica received her bachelor's in elementary education from the University of Tampa.

**MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT THE SUPERINTENDENT'S NOMINATION OF JESSICA COUTU FOR THE POSITION OF GRADE 5 TEACHER AT A BACHELORS STEP 4 AND A SALARY OF FORTY-THREE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY-TWO DOLLARS (\$43,182)**  
**MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HOWIE**

## **ON THE QUESTION**

Vice Chairman Sarris stated she was unaware there were two vacancies for 5<sup>th</sup> grade and questioned other vacancies.

Patricia Bouley, Principal, CSDA, noted the district is in search of a Reading Specialist and an RtI Interventionist. The possibility of an additional position will be discussed later in the meeting. It does not represent an increase in the number of 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers from two years prior. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted 1 of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers was moved to 4<sup>th</sup> grade this year and has opted to stay in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. A flow chart will be provided at a future meeting.

Vice Chairman Bergskaug spoke of openings at the Richard Maghakian Memorial School (RMMS). The interview process is underway.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**5-0-0**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Brookline School Board . . . . . [April 21, 2021](#)

*The following amendments were offered:*

- Page 4, Line 38; replace “participate:” with “participated”
- Page 6, Line 25; delete “Although”

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

**MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HOWIE**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**5-0-0**

**PUBLIC INPUT** - None

**PRINCIPALS’ REPORT**

Principal Bouley congratulated Grade 3 on completing the New Hampshire Statewide Assessment System (SAS) testing. Grades 4 and 6 have completed their NH SAS testing. Makeup tests will be provided for those who were absent. Grade 5 students are completing their reading and math this week. The science test will be administered June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Remote learners are coming in-house to complete tests.

The Aimsweb testing is underway. Aimsweb is benchmarking, which is used internally. Although RMMS has been utilizing the test, this is the first year for CSDA. Testing was done in the fall, students receiving services for RtI were tested in the winter, and now the entire building is being tested. The results will provide a picture of growth that has occurred from September through June.

Life Scout William Scales, Troop 260, has completed his fundraising effort for his Eagle Scout project of constructing a pavilion for the Outdoor Learning Environment at RMMS. Next steps include obtaining a building permit and solidifying dates for construction.

Life Scout Scott Happy, Troop 212, Hollis, constructed three moveable benches at CSDA. They are currently located at the basketball courts.

A letter was sent to 6<sup>th</sup> grade families last Thursday providing the details for the expected graduation on Thursday, June 17<sup>th</sup> (rain date is June 16<sup>th</sup>). The final announcement will be made on June 14<sup>th</sup>.

Enrollment projections for the 2021-2022 school year show kindergarten with an enrollment of 73. Four additional students have been enrolled since the writing of the report. When reaching enrollment of 77, the number of sections would equate to 4.53. With the current numbers, class size would be 19.25 for four sections, and 15.4 if having five sections.

Grade 3 is increasing to 79 students. Class size would be 19.75.

Looking at the overall numbers there is concern with the potential for grade 4 (22.25/section) and grade 1 (19.5/section) being higher than desired. The policy dictates class size for grade 1 to be maxed at 17 and grade 4 at 23. If increasing the number of sections in grade 1 to five, class size would be 15.6 and in grade 4, class size would be 17.8.

The question was asked of whether the direction taken should be to postpone any decisions until learning whether there is additional activity for move-ins/move-outs. Superintendent Corey stated there will likely be anticipated job postings to obtain resumes while watching those numbers. Grades 1 and 4 are being looked at not only based on numbers, but also input received from teachers regarding potential learning loss. One of the areas of difficulty over the past year was reading, e.g. lost opportunities for small group reading. There is concern for kindergarten students moving into grade 1. Grade 4 is the same issue where they are transitioning to a new building, and there are concerns based on NH SAS scores (compared to how our students typically score). This year, the State is not providing comparisons between districts.

Superintendent Corey noted Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds are intended to address learning loss. The best means of closing learning loss is small class sizes. Funds are also available through the Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) Grant. This year, the district is fortunate to also have a Contingency Fund available.

The hiring market is getting difficult. Should the situation arise where the numbers are close and the resumes received are not what the district would like to see, the option is available to utilize Paraprofessionals/support people in the rooms.

Several families are constructing homes in Town, and several requests have been received for enrollment in September where homes may not be completed until November, etc. District policy is in place to address those situations. A number of these families are from neighboring communities that were unable to open, and the families are deciding to move specifically for the school system. Additional information will be available for the June meeting. Should there be an identified need, the district will hire.

Superintendent Corey spoke of being comfortable with an anticipated posting as he feels confident there will be a decision made in June as opposed to waiting until the July/August timeframe. It is unlikely districts would release individuals from contracts late in the summer.

Chairman Haag stated appreciation for that consideration for kindergarten and grade 1, but the 4<sup>th</sup> grade numbers are in line with policy. He has concern with utilizing grant funding for positions. He agreed with doing the work to have resumes on hand should a decision be made. Superintendent Corey remarked that is a grade where he questions if move-outs may occur. It is also a grade where historically move-ins are seen as those are the families moving into their second or final home. It is more likely that the kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade classes will see an additional section given class size specifications and that the 4<sup>th</sup> grade may have a paraprofessional or a shared paraprofessional to lower the class numbers as there is some concern with the test scores from grade 3 to 4.

## **DISCUSSION**

- Facilities Committee Update

The Facilities Committee met remotely with the architects earlier in the day. They were focusing in one our programming decisions, e.g., programs we offer, types of spaces needed, projected enrollment, etc. If enrollment predictions are correct and the workforce housing was to move forward next year, looking at 5 classrooms per grade level at RMMS would put us on safe ground. Most of those pieces would be able to be done through restructuring rather than an addition. The Committee will meet next on June 14<sup>th</sup>. The same discussion will occur for CSDA.

At RMMS, if doing an update to the building, an area that is believed necessary is the kitchen area. It has had various updates over time and is small for the number of staff required to service the number of students. That also comes back to the energy discussion.

At RMMS, the goal would be to bring the discussion and the available options to the Board in June (repeating the process in August/September) and follow that with the same information/discussion for CSDA.

For RMMS, there is no concern with next year's enrollment even though a slight increase. The current structure will allow the district to deliver services.

At CSDA, a hard look must be taken at the two portables that were purchased about 20 years ago, and how those are either incorporated or removed.

Chairman Haag noted the School and Town Services Committee would conduct its first meeting the following day.

- Mask Update

Superintendent Corey spoke of inquiries received with concerns, particularly with the hot weather upon us. During their call last Wednesday, Dr. Chan, State Epidemiologist, was specifically asked about masks. New Hampshire DHHS is not at the point where they believe masks should be removed during recess. Their thought process is not necessarily about the transfer of the virus, but the quarantine aspect. If out at recess and not wearing masks, were one student to become ill, all the students that were together during that time would be quarantined. One of the comments the Administration has heard loud and clear from families is they cannot go through another quarantine. The Administration will continue to monitor the issue of masks. The Administration continues to work closely with families and staff where there are situations such as a student having asthma, seasonal allergies, etc. Superintendent Corey commented with graduation/promotion ceremonies coming up, he would hate to see one of those students unable to participate due to a sibling, and therefore all students in that family, being quarantined.

As of this time, with the information that has been provided, he is of the belief the new school year will not start with masks. A much more refined plan of how matters will be addressed will be built over the coming weeks. He has spoken with local medical personnel who were on his health committee, and although not in 100% agreement, each was of the opinion it is the right step at the right time to stay where we are.

The Governor and Department of Education in the states of Connecticut and Massachusetts declared no masks at recess. We will not see that from our Department of Education or Governor. There are a couple of school districts in the State that are looking at this and potentially will go without masks. He has reached out to their superintendents and will gather their data to see how it is going for them. They are uncertain if it is the right or wrong decision to make, it is just where their school boards and communities happen to be at this time.

Superintendent Corey noted SAU 41 has been in school more than anyone else. He is extremely proud of what the district has been able to offer its students. He would like to finish as normal as possible. In a perfect world, he would love for field day to be without masks as a sort of celebration for the students, but he is not there yet.

Chairman Haag stated his overwhelming support for that decision.

- Revenue & Expense Report - Unreserved Fund Balance

Projected, as of 5-10-21, is an FY21 Unassigned Fund Balance (UFB) of \$442,095. Reducing from that, allocations to the Maintenance Trust (\$75,000), Special Education Trust (\$25,000), Contingency (\$40,000), and Retained Fund Balance (\$129,519) results in a projected fund balance of \$172,576. Noted was that the vote on the amount to be allocated to the Retained Fund Balance is not typically done until the end of the fiscal year and audit. The amount that could be retained is cited.

Chairman Haag questioned and was informed the \$172,576 projected number is the actual projection, at this time. The previously estimated number that could be returned to the tax base was \$200,000. It is believed the UFB will easily reach \$200,000 by the end of the fiscal year. There is the potential of reducing the Retained Fund Balance to achieve that number should it not be reached through encumbrances that get released, etc.

Provided for consideration were four priority areas for accelerating CIP projects using UFB:

Priority 1: RMMS/CSDA Building Evaluation/Recommendations (\$30,000)

What started as an energy project has morphed into a review of enrollment/buildings and if there is a need to expand. As a result of consideration of expansion, there is a cost of approximately \$30,000. As that work has already begun, if funds are available, it would be beneficial to encumber them to move forward with the rest of the study on CSDA and make recommendations to the Board and Town in the fall.

Priority 2: Parking Lot Resurfacing; RMMS (\$19,500; included in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for FY23) and CSDA (\$22,000 CIP for FY23)

These are items that would be in next year's budget. We are on a regular maintenance schedule to resurface the parking lots. These items are in that schedule to be addressed in FY23. Superintendent Corey stated he is not advocating for these items as he believes staying on a regular maintenance cycle is good practice.

Priority 3: CSDA Flooring-Student Services (\$17,000 CIP for FY23)

This was an item that was included early in the planning stages for the FY22 budget. It was removed/delayed. He sees it as an item that should be addressed through the Maintenance Trust Fund as part of next year's budget. However, if the UFB grows as predicted, consideration should be given to addressing this in June.

Priority 4: CSDA Fire Panel (\$42,000 CIP for FY23)

This is an ongoing item that is listed in the CIP as part of next year's budget. The panel is evaluated each year. Right now, it is not believed it must be done. The Brookline Fire Chief will come in during the fall. He will do the regular inspection and provide guidance.

Superintendent Corey stated the only item he is recommending is Priority 1 (\$30,000). He may come back in June and suggest consideration be given to Priority 3 based on what is known to be available in the UFB at that time.

Should the \$30,000 be expended in addition to the \$200,000 to be returned to the tax base as stated, the cost to taxpayers would be \$0.04 (loss of reduction) or \$17.60 based on a \$400,000 home. The parking lot resurfacing has an estimated cost of \$41,500 and would represent a \$0.06 or \$24.40, flooring at CSDA with an estimated cost of \$17,000 represents approx. \$0.02 or \$10.00, and the fire panel at \$42,000 represents approx. \$0.06 or \$24.80.

Superintendent Corey noted with some of the move-ins, there is seen an increase in special education costs. There are going to be items that are not budgeted for. When looking at the priorities listed, his recommendation, at this time, is to cover the cost of the study of the impact of increased enrollment. Based on the potential for an enrollment increase in Brookline, the same recommendation for funding of a study at the middle school (also costing \$30,000) will be presented to the COOP School Board.

Vice Chairman Sarris questioned if consideration has been given to other items that could be addressed through the Maintenance Trust Fund. Superintendent Corey responded that during the budget process a series of projects that will be done in FY22 were outlined. A public hearing on expenditures from the trust will be conducted in June. Those items include windows replacement, flooring at RMMS, exterior door ramps, and HVAC controller replacement.

Member Marsano commented she does not feel it is a wise decision to move forward with purchases for renovations, building materials, if the projects can be delayed. The cost of materials, at this time, is not favorable.

Superintendent Corey remarked the same can be said for the sealing of the parking lot(s) as oil price is up, etc. It could go up higher or go back down. It is an unknown. Chairman Haag commented on entering an inflationary environment. Costs will be going up. We also come into a budget cycle where we had the large grant loss. The question is whether it is easier to shoulder now if able to return the \$200,000, etc. He is appreciative of having the discussion now and revisiting the topic when the public hearing is held on the proposed expenditures from the maintenance trust.

Superintendent Corey commented in the November/December timeframe, the Board may choose to move forward with a bond for renovations to the two schools. Were that the direction, he would recommend including the fire panel and other expenditures with that effort. Currently, interest rates are very favorable.

At the June meeting, the Board will be provided with more of a concrete projection for the UFB, and a preliminary discussion could be had on the Retained Fund Balance.

Chairman Haag commented on the \$30,000 expenditure for the study noting one of the highlighted advantages to the consultant chosen was that there would be no up-front cost. He questioned what the \$30,000 would cover. Superintendent Corey remarked there were no up-front costs when looking at the energy study, e.g., boilers, windows, doors. What changes is now you get into where the architect must create the plans, an estimate would have to be worked up that could be used for a bond request, etc.

Vice Chairman Sarris noted the Retained Fund Balance is an area where there is flexibility to ensure that the \$200,000 is returned to the tax base. She questioned if that would eventually replace the Contingency Fund and was informed it will. The \$30,000 could be absorbed into the Retained Fund Balance so that we are sort of honoring that idea. Superintendent Corey stated agreement.

He noted the district is not looking to increase staff through the use of grant funds, which would result in having to absorb the entirety of the cost when grant funding is no longer available. The intent is to look to determine if increased enrollment is a long-term situation that would result in absorbing additional costs in the budget. The ESSER funds can be utilized through December of 2023 and REAP funds are continually being renewed.

### **DELIBERATIONS**

- To authorize the Superintendent to hire, accept resignations and terminate employment until the September Board meeting

**MOTION BY MEMBER MARSANO TO AUTHORIZE THE SUPERINTENDENT TO HIRE, ACCEPT RESIGNATIONS, AND TERMINATE STAFF UNTIL THE SEPTEMBER BOARD MEETING, AND REQUIRE NOTIFICATION TO THE BOARD OF SUCH ACTIONS  
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SARRIS**

### **ON THE QUESTION**

Member Jew questioned if the anticipation is that there will not be a need for Board meetings over the summer. Superintendent Corey explained when entering a competitive time like this, this provides the Superintendent the ability, when the principals have selected their candidates, to interview and formally offer a position. The Board is informed of the hiring at its next meeting. If timelier, the information is shared through an email and again at the next meeting.

Chairman Haag noted the earlier discussion of posting for three open positions and questioned if those positions would be filled prior to Board discussion. Superintendent Corey noted the agenda item regarding recommendation for staffing based on enrollment projections and education specifications. His plan for those positions is to report back to the Board with the situation as it exists in June.

### **MOTION CARRIED**

**5-0-0**

- To see what action, if any, the Board will take regarding the use of Unreserved Fund Balance

*The item will appear on the Board's June agenda for further discussion/action.*

- To see what action the Board will take regarding the Superintendent's recommendation for staffing based on enrollment projections and Board education specifications

**MOTION BY MEMBER MARSANO TO APPROVE THE SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STAFFING, AS PRESENTED  
MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER JEW**

### **ON THE QUESTION**

Superintendent Corey explained should the kindergarten and/or 1<sup>st</sup> grade enrollment numbers stay well above the education specifications between now and June and the Principal recommends a candidate of choice, he would like to move forward with the position(s). The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade numbers are below education specifications, and he does not see a pressing need there. Approving this would indicate if staying at 19.5 in first grade then there is agreement that does not align with education specifications, an anticipated opening will be advertised, and interviews conducted. There is the likelihood the process may not be completed by the end

of June, but if it is, and there is a candidate of choice identified, he would like the approval to move forward with hiring.

**MOTION CARRIED**

**5-0-0**

**WORKSHOP**

- Informational Update – Superintendent’s Update - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Last spring a group of citizens brought forth, to the SAU 41 Governing Board, a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Resolution. At that time, the Superintendent recommended no action as the focus had to be on the opening of school, COVID plans, etc. He did not want the boards to be bogged down with two major items, and the priority was the opening of school.

Later, the Hollis Brookline Cooperative (COOP) School District and Board received a communication from a group of students regarding their concerns over issues they had experienced. It is the job of the Superintendent to represent students. A Superintendent’s Advisory Committee was formed consisting of representation from both towns and a multitude of viewpoints. The Committee met in public (vast majority on Zoom) and allowed for public input.

Superintendent Corey remarked the information prepared by the Advisory Committee was ready for presentation a few months back; however, it was felt important that it not look as if the boards were trying to make decisions before the citizenry had the opportunity to have their voice at the Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting of the COOP School District was very well attended with residents waiting 9 hours to discuss this topic. The discussion was robust and allowed him to digest further information from the multiple viewpoints expressed. The Article did not pass. The takeaway was that the administration should start back down the path of working with the boards.

The [statement](#) begins with the SAU is committed to nondiscrimination and strives to be an inclusive community. The two communities always have and always will be, and that is what the citizenry desires.

It was felt important to reference NH Senate Bill 263, which came out in September of 2019. A lot of people believed this effort was the result of social unrest. The State of New Hampshire put the bill forward in September of 2019 and asked that we review our policy. The SAU has strong policies, which have been informally reviewed and will be formally reviewed as we move forward.

Our two communities have never been satisfied simply meeting the standards of the law; have always wanted to ensure we are putting forth the best solutions, curriculum, supports for the students we serve.

There has been a great deal of discussion in the community around Critical Race Theory. One of the things the Committee felt strongly about is how, in our district, we have always ensured we are working on behalf of the individual. In our case, the student. Critical Race Theory is about a group theory; about what a group does.



physical, economic, or developmental challenges, our community recognizes that our schools can play an integral role in the facilitation of a student's experience by modeling positive interactions. We understand that creating a culture of mutual respect and value of perspectives can plant seeds of positive change in a child's life."

Superintendent Corey highlighted "provide equality of opportunity (not outcomes)". Using the 100-yard dash as an example, the intent is to ensure everyone has the right clothing, shoes, etc. We know some kids will train harder than others and some have natural ability. When that race starts, we cannot guarantee the outcome. From the point of view of the school district, as much as we want everyone to be as successful as possible, we cannot guarantee the outcome because the student has ownership of a lot of that.

Added to the language was the word "competitive". A lot of discussion occurred around the fact that we live in a competitive world. We do not want to discourage competition; we would like it to be balanced and for every child to have a support system so that when struggling with competition there is someone to go to. We see in our students that competitiveness. They are planning their future and competition weaves its way in.

**"Inclusion:** We commit to pursuing deliberate efforts to ensure that our school community is a place where differences are welcomed, different perspectives are respectfully heard and where every individual feels a sense of value, belonging, and inclusion. We know that by creating a vibrant climate of inclusiveness, we can more effectively leverage the resources of diversity to advance our collective capabilities."

Superintendent Corey stated his recommendations to be:

1. That the Brookline Policy Committee conduct a review of existing policies related to DEI.

This was done by a member of the Advisory Committee who found the policies to be well-written and meeting the requirements outlined in the RSA. However, you always want the person who will be in the courtroom defending you to say you have outstanding policies. As part of the overall review of policies, the Administration will ensure those around DEI move to the forefront.

2. That the Brookline School District maintains its time-tested curriculum while examining how we deliver instruction while making no changes to what we teach.

We have a solid time-tested proven curriculum. When we do make changes, it is methodical and done through a process. The only potential change that would be coming up would be from the State of New Hampshire around social studies. Social Studies is being reviewed by the State (regular cycle). The State was expected to issue a change about 18 months ago. In that process, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug would work with the elementary district to determine how what the State is recommending aligns to what we presently do, how much of that is just something shifting to a different grade level, how much of it is new content, whether we agree with the new content, etc.

He spoke of the instance 7 years prior where the district chose not to move to the Common Core; the SAU went through the Common Core and tweaked where it was felt it could enhance the curriculum. When believing what was already in place exceeded that of the Common Core, it was retained. That is the same approach he would recommend in this instance; not change what we teach, look at how we deliver some instruction.

No changes to the curriculum are being recommended.

3. That the Brookline School District make diversity, equity, and inclusion a strategic priority that is reviewed on an ongoing basis.

The SAU is about to complete the Portrait of a Cavalier, which is what we want a graduate of our high school to look like. Once that work is complete, the backwards by design model will be used to work our way back down to what we want to do in kindergarten or preschool. Then we will work our way back up and find out exactly what we want for our model of how we achieve those pieces. In there will be pieces that we talk about social emotional learning, diversity, equity, inclusion, and how we incorporate those items into our Strategic Plan.

The annual review of the Strategic Plan is forcing all of us to look at it from a critical standpoint. This year is probably the first year that we did not have a presentation on goals and objectives. As the SAU goes through that process (beginning with the Retreat on June 24<sup>th</sup>), goals and objectives for buildings will be reviewed. Some of that will be based on learning loss, SAS data, etc. In there would be any goals or objectives we have for DEI, social emotional learning.

Superintendent Corey stated there to be no intention of bringing in a consultant and spending money for this topic. It is believed there are internal experts or internal experts who can research and determine steps that are appropriate for us. The district will be looking at professional development as that is an overarching piece whenever you look at how to deliver instruction.

4. That we continue our programs and services to help those who need assistance while allowing those with special ability to stretch, grow, and be challenged at an appropriate level.

We have multi-faceted programs for students who are struggling, and several programs for those students who excel in math, are good writers, better readers. The entire reading program, K-6, is based on a student's ability to read.

5. That we promote, where developmentally appropriate, the use of courageous conversations to teach our students to feel comfortable in expressing themselves now and in the future.

If we use the vocabulary and start it at the elementary grades, it will have a new definition by the time it gets to the high school grades, but it is all about respecting each other's viewpoints, how to have those discussions, etc.

6. That we further investigate the Choose Love program and determine if we should expand it throughout the Hollis School District.

Pre-pandemic, the SAU brought in the Choose Love program for Social Emotional Learning (SEL). The program is based on the tragedy that occurred in Connecticut as the result of a school shooting. It has been adopted by the State of New Hampshire, and the Governor is a huge proponent. Our teachers have started professional development in what is a strong program.

Choose Love has started to expand into DEI. Superintendent Corey remarked, based on what he knows to date, he believes the SAU should investigate further expansion of that. The Administration has been in contact with the founder of the program, and she would be more than willing to come back and conduct another professional development for staff and run a nighttime session for families that might be interested in learning more about the program.

Superintendent Corey stated the intent of his recommendations is to put the items that fall under the School Board right back to the School Board. The Superintendent's Advisory Committee has been disbanded.

Vice Chairman Sarris stated appreciation for the time, careful consideration, and recommendations that have come out of this process. The statement "That the Brookline School District maintains its time-tested curriculum while examining how we deliver instruction while making no changes to what we teach." is a reaction to a lot of concerns and she respects that and appreciates that point within the context of this plan, but she always hesitates because to her making progress with something inherently may involve changing something. She understands the spirit of what this statement is indicating, which is we are not going to actively start teaching something new because of this, but as a Board member, to her that is a halt in progress when we say we are not going to make a change in something. Following that we talk about promoting courageous conversation and other points that show progress. She wants to ensure something is being set up that allows the district to do it, that we are not giving ourselves steps that inhibit other steps.

Superintendent Corey responded that he and the Committee were concerned with the notion that we are going to throw everything that we do out for a new curriculum, and that is not the intent. The Board has never allowed the Administration to do anything on the spur of the moment, it must be a process. He has noted the concern, and it will be discussed further in June.

Chairman Haag spoke of appreciation for the discussion and believes the statement addresses a lot of things holistically. It addresses a need in a time when it was felt particularly important. He also thinks there was some misinformation around what this committee was doing. It is resoundingly clear to him that this is not Critical Race Theory. He wished to continue to say that. It is also not meant to slow anyone down. This is for the entire spectrum. The points made by members of the Board are valid. He is pleased with the courageous conversations and the Choose Love Program. Courageous conversation is something that needs to be learned early.

Member Jew thanked those involved in the work. She particularly likes the aspect that students not only need to excel at academic focuses but will also be judged on the content of their character. It reaffirms that a well-rounded student is the goal, and this helps support that.

Chairman Haag questioned next steps, e.g., recommendations included in a formal statement adopted by the Board, made part of the Strategic Plan, etc. Superintendent Corey stated at the June meeting time will be set aside to discuss the statement and recommendations. After having had an opportunity to further digest the information, if the direction remains consistent, perhaps adjusting by addressing the points made by Vice Chairman Sarris, emphasize the aspect of the well-rounded students, and start to move these recommendations to priorities and objectives inclusive of action items within the Strategic Plan. When the presentation on goals is made in August/September, we would take out of the Strategic Plan items for this year.

Principal Bouley commented at CSDA she uses the calendar from the Choose Love Program. When she does her announcements, she chooses something off their calendar. This year it has been about social emotional learning. It just gives things to think about for the day. The teachers then take that moment and add that into their curriculum throughout the day.

Chairman Haag commented on being pleased with the idea of making Choose Love a workshop for families.

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

**MOTION BY MEMBER MARSANO THAT THE BOARD, BY ROLL CALL, GO INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION PURSUANT TO RSA 91-A:3, II (a) THE DISMISSAL, PROMOTION OR COMPENSATION OF ANY PUBLIC EMPLOYEE**

**MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HOWIE**

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

Yea: Karen Jew, Rebecca Howie, Alison Marsano, Erin Sarris, Kenneth Haag

5

Nay:

0

**MOTION CARRIED**

*The Board went into non-public session at 7:26 p.m.*

*The Board came out of non-public session at 7:31 p.m.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION BY MEMBER MARSANO TO ADJOURN**

**SECONDED BY MEMBER HOWIE**

**MOTION CARRIED**

**5-0-0**

*The May 26, 2021, meeting of the Brookline School Board was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.*

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