

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23

**BROOKLINE SCHOOL BOARD
DECEMBER 18, 2019
MEETING MINUTES**

A meeting of the Brookline School Board was conducted on Wednesday, December 18, 2019 at 6:02 p.m. at the Captain Samuel Douglass Academy.

Matthew Maguire, Chairman, presided:

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

Members of the Board Absent:

Also in Attendance: Gina Bergskaug, Assistant Superintendent
Bob Thompson, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services
Kristen Maher, Assistant Business Administrator
Dennis Dobe, Principal, Captain Samuel Douglass Academy
Daniel Molinari, Principal, Richard Maghakian Memorial School
Dana Ketchen, Finance Committee

24
25

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

26 A request was made that the agenda be adjusted to include a presentation by Life Scout Tim Whalen as part
27 of the Principals' Report.

28
29 At the Board's last meeting, the discussion around the request for facility use by the Brookline Women's
30 Club was postponed. It was requested that item be added under Deliberations.

31
32 **MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG THAT THE AGENDA BE ADJUSTED, AS REQUESTED**
33 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER SARRIS**
34 **MOTION CARRIED**

35 **5-0-0**

36
37

CORRESPONDENCE/RESIGNATIONS/NOMINATIONS

38
39 Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the desire for the Board to hold the date of January 8th as a
40 potential date for a Special Meeting. The special meeting would be utilized, if necessary, to formerly
41 approve a Collective Bargaining Agreement.

42
43

PUBLIC INPUT

44
45 Karen Jewell, Milford Road

46
47 Thanked the Board for placing full-day kindergarten on the Warrant. She spoke of her disappointment and
48 understanding of why the position of Curriculum Coordinator was zeroed out this year. She commented on
49 the good work she has seen done in other districts, and the desire for it to be considered in the future.

1 **PRINCIPALS' REPORT**

2
3 Life Scout Tim Whelan, Troop 4, Milford, provided a presentation on his proposed Eagle Scout project
4 (can be viewed [here](#)). The project would involve the construction of accessibility ramps at the Richard
5 Maghakian Memorial School (RMMS) to aid students having walking disability in exiting the building
6 safely and without difficulty.

7
8 The ramps would be constructed at doors 6, 8, 26, 30, 36, and exit A. The ramps at doors 6, 8, and 26
9 would be similar in style (photos were displayed). The doors have an approx. 6" stepdown and are approx.
10 36" wide. Proposed is that these ramps be a minimum of 36" (in accordance with ADA requirements) and
11 have an appropriate slope grade to meet the ground. The ADA suggests a slope no greater than 1-12 (for
12 every 12 units of horizontal length, 1 unit of vertical riser). Exit A will require a wider ramp (approx. 89")
13 and a stepdown of approx. 6". The ramp's design will be similar to doors 6, 8, 26, and 36. Door 30 has a
14 stepdown from the door and another from the cement. Proposed for that exit is a ramp going from the door
15 to the ground bypassing the cement step entirely. It would be safer than two consecutive ramps. Proposed
16 is a ramp 36" in width and a length of approx. 10-12'.

17
18 Construction materials include 2 x 6 or 2 x 8 severe weather, pressure treated lumber, and topped with 3/4"
19 plywood with edging and side bumper and an appropriate side to close in the underneath of the ramp
20 (possibly cut plywood).

21
22 Ramps would be painted with neon yellow outdoor paint for visibility. The top of the ramp would be a
23 corrugated composite ribbed rubber mat to be epoxied to the top of the plywood to prevent slipping and
24 ensure durability of the surface while being permeable.

25
26 Volunteers will consist of members of his Troop 4, family, friends, and members of the RMMS school
27 community.

28
29 Fundraising would be in the form of a bake sale at the RMMS PTO family night in either January or
30 February and a bake sale at the STEM event on January 30th. Fundraising efforts cannot begin until project
31 approval is received from the Eagle Board.

32
33 Construction of the project would begin once fundraising efforts have secured enough revenue to purchase
34 the required materials. Project completion is anticipated to be mid-April.

35
36 Asked if there is a date by which the project must be completed, Life Scout Whelan stated his deadline to
37 be prior to June as he is enlisting in the military, and is being shipped out two weeks after graduation.

38
39 Asked about the project budget, Life Scout Whelan spoke of the need for additional research to determine
40 the total budget.

41
42 Daniel Molinari, Principal, RMMS, remarked he and Life Scout Whelan have met on several occasions and
43 have toured the facility. He commented on the big plan approach Life Scout Whelan is taking with this
44 project, and how he took the time to meet with a student and family to gain information on what they would
45 like to see with the completion of the project.

46
47 Principal Molinari addressed the chart depicting the areas where the accessibility ramps would be placed
48 describing the rationale for the choices.

1 Asked what resulted in his choice of RMMS, Life Scout Whelan responded he learned of the school and the
2 desire for the ramps through one of the adults in his troop.

3
4 *The consensus of the Board was to approve Life Scout Whelan's Eagle Scout project to construct*
5 *accessibility ramps at RMMS.*

6
7 Principal Molinari highlighted some of the events listed on the calendar, e.g., report cards have gone out
8 and are available online, Hour of Code occurring at both schools.

9
10 Principal Dobe, Principal, Captain Samuel Douglass Academy (CSDA), spoke of the annual Winter
11 Concert being the highlight of the musical program where the school band, chorus, and orchestra all
12 perform on the same stage.

13
14 Principal Dobe noted the re-opening of the Wolves Warehouse (school store). It is run by a 5th grade
15 student as an enrichment activity. The student is doing a great job working with Linda Durkee, Senior
16 Secretary.

17
18 **PRESENTATION**

- 19
20 • Whole Child Education (SEL)

21
22 Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug commented about three years ago she noticed that a number of
23 professional development requests were coming in with various pieces of whole child focus. There was a
24 desire by various buildings to do this work, and they were going in directions that were generally the same,
25 but not necessarily coordinated. She believed it prudent to look at the SAU umbrella and ensure whatever
26 it is we are doing in the Pre-k-3 schools it was followed up and supported in the 4-6, middle school, and the
27 high school.

28
29 Assistant Superintendent Thompson commented when talking about the whole child focus it is important to
30 cover the aspect of physical safety. When it comes to emergency management and school safety, the SAU
31 is a leader within the State. There is a district-wide safety committee consisting of representatives from all
32 6 schools, police, fire, EMTs and Homeland Security. The District has highly trained staff who have
33 completed (on their own) hundreds of hours in active shooter, incident command, threat assessment, etc.

34
35 He spoke of activities that have taken place over the past few years; all 6 schools have comprehensive
36 emergency operations plans, which are standardized across all buildings. If you walk into RMMS as a
37 volunteer, visitor, or student, the procedures in place in that building are identical to those at CSDA, the
38 middle school and the high school.

39
40 Assistant Superintendent Thompson stated every room in each of the buildings includes a laminated piece
41 of paper that identifies how the building would respond to 8 typical emergencies. It was previously called
42 the 7 responses. Mr. Molinari suggested an 8th being clear hallways; there should be a protocol for quickly
43 clearing the hallways. The practice was adopted at RMMS and the Safety Committee decided to adopt it in
44 all 6 of the buildings. The information was shared with the Department of Homeland Security who adopted
45 it for the State.

46
47 Two years ago the Governor started an Emergency Preparedness Task Force after a school tragedy. There
48 was one teacher who represented that group; a Hollis Brookline Teacher, Dr. Laura DeRosa.

1 Hundreds of thousands of dollars of grant funding has been invested into infrastructure, e.g., protective film
2 for windows, controlled access, etc. This past June the district was asked to present at the Emergency
3 Preparedness conference in Manchester. It is a conference typically attended by emergency service
4 personnel. The District was the first school to be asked to present. The head of the Department of
5 Homeland Security showed up with several of his colleagues, sat in the front row, and the comment they
6 made prior to the start of the presentation was this is Hollis Brookline, they are the standard when it comes
7 to school safety and emergency preparedness in the State of New Hampshire.

8
9 The message given to staff is yes we are at the top of our game when it comes to emergency management.
10 However, it is not enough. All of the work that has been done is very reactive. It is predicated on
11 something has to go wrong in order for us to exercise all of the training we have done. If we really want to
12 be proactive when it comes to safety, this is really where we need to look at Social Emotional Learning
13 (SEL) and the whole child. We have students in our classrooms that have anxiety, some so bad they cannot
14 come to school. There is the need to ensure we are educating the whole child. It is a lot larger than
15 physical safety. That is where the SEL and the whole child comes in.

16
17 During the November professional development day, a group came in from the Choose Love Movement.
18 The Choose Love Movement was started by Scarlett Lewis. Her son Jesse was one of 20 students
19 murdered at the Sandy Hook Elementary School. The message she had for the entire staff was very well
20 received; one about essentially choosing love, creating opportunities to create communities of caring within
21 our school to have understanding and tolerance and to get to know each other a lot better. The feedback
22 received from staff was very positive.

23
24 Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated about three years ago a SAU-wide committee was formed
25 consisting of administrators, teachers, school counselors, and school Psychologists from all 6 of the
26 buildings. They looked to identify a mission statement, their purpose, and the work they would do as a
27 group. In addition, they wished to identify an agreed upon definition of what SEL or Whole Child
28 Education is so that when speaking about it within the SAU there is a common understanding.

29
30 The committee believed it important to develop a community resource list. In the moment, there is a
31 school counselor, teacher or Principal who needs to find a resource for a family, and the desire was to have
32 it be an immediate tool that could be provided. The committee developed a comprehensive list of
33 resources. Another objective was to identify what was occurring in each of the buildings in terms of SEL
34 interventions/tools being used, effectiveness and a determination of continuing with current practices or
35 adding to them.

36
37 In order to determine effectiveness, a teacher questionnaire was implemented so that teachers could answer
38 if they were observing certain trends, if they felt comfortable working on certain characteristics in the
39 classroom, and if they needed any support. From there, the committee identified focus areas for the district.

40
41 The Mission Statement for SAU 41 is to promote a relationship-centered culture that supports academic,
42 social emotional and physical well-being in a nurturing learning environment. We aim to develop resilient
43 and productive members of society and be responsive to the diversity and needs of students, staff, families
44 and community.

45
46 Social Emotional Learning is the process by which children and adults develop the awareness and skills to
47 make positive decisions, deepen their relationships, and reach their goals. The definition was pulled from
48 the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). They led the work with SEL,

1 have been doing work for over 20 years, drive the research, guide practice, and inform a lot of policy in this
2 area.

3
4 Assistant Superintendent Thompson remarked one of the first things the committee did was look to the
5 research; what does it say about SEL. One of many pieces of data looked at was the 2013 American
6 College of Health Association survey (survey of 100,000 college students). The data indicated 84.3% felt
7 overwhelmed by all they had to do, 60% sad, 51% felt overwhelming anxiety, etc. What really hit home
8 with the group was that 8% seriously considered suicide. A lot of the articles they reviewed defined,
9 particularly at the college level, that there is a mental health crisis that is occurring post-secondary. Kids
10 may be coming to college equipped with the academic skills, but those social and emotional skills are not
11 coming.

12
13 SEL programs enhance children's confidence and increase their engagement. Schools that have
14 comprehensive SEL programs see an increase in academic performance. At times you hear the argument
15 why focus on SEL when the focus should be on academic achievement. Research indicates when you
16 focus on quality SEL for children you will increase academic achievement levels. Children who are able to
17 effectively manage their thinking, attention, and behavior are also more likely to have better levels of
18 achievement. Children with greater social emotional competence are more likely to be ready for college,
19 succeed in their careers, have positive relationships and better mental health, and become engaged citizens.
20 Those with strong social skills are more likely to make and sustain friendships, initiate positive
21 relationships with teachers, participate in classroom activities, and be positively engaged in learning.

22
23 Social and emotional skills serve as important protective factors in the face of negative life events or
24 chronic stressors and support general wellbeing, such as job and financial security as well as physical and
25 mental health, through adulthood. There is a great deal of research about the impact of trauma on the brain.
26 What we know is that trauma can actually rewire the brain and create pathways that make it incredibly
27 difficult for students in terms of academics, their relationships, their emotional regulation, depression,
28 anxiety, etc. Research suggests the brain can be rewired, and SEL, when done well through a research
29 based program, can actually do that.

30
31 The CASEL Wheel breaks up into competencies; self-awareness, self-management, social awareness,
32 relationship skills, and responsible decision making. The District has added optimistic thinking, personal
33 responsibility, and goal directed behavior to the focus areas. Those are the competencies that were looked
34 at when the questionnaire was developed.

35
36 The standards were defined, and all of the teachers, nurses, school counselors, and principals were asked
37 how often students demonstrated strengths in this area in the last month (in general), and how comfortable
38 they were with teaching the skills. The responses indicated self-management and self-awareness were the
39 clear areas where we need to focus. Those are the areas where it is felt the most professional development
40 could be offered and the areas where the students need the most support. That has been the focus for this
41 year.

42
43 Every year there are district goals that are worked toward throughout the year. This year was a little
44 different in that the SAU 41 District goal of the Whole Child was established and presented to the
45 Governing Board a few months ago to be able to provide the pre-K-12 vantage point. Wanting to ensure
46 that all teachers would receive professional development in all of the critical areas, the professional
47 development day was broken up so that everyone had the Keynote, which was on Social Emotional
48 Learning, and then they went to Whole Child Education. Some folks went into a room and started writing
49 lessons on self-management and self-awareness, some went to sessions where they learned more about

1 those specific skills, some went to middle school focused sessions, etc. The second strand was instructional
2 best practices of the essential standards, and the final strand of the day was school safety.

3
4 Having the whole child goal established, the professional development day targeted the three key areas. As
5 a SAU committee, they realized that every age level has different needs. Although the entire SAU is
6 focused on self-management and self-awareness, that will look different for a kindergarten student than it
7 will for a 12th grade student. There are individual building based committees conducting this work under
8 the direction of the SAU committee.

9
10 The SAU committee will continue to meet quarterly to hold every building accountable and to ensure what
11 we are doing and that we are communicating K-12 so that we have an organized and intentional approach.
12 They will continue to ask the teachers the question in the spring; with what we have implemented, did it
13 have an impact. If not, do we need to do it again or change it. Do we still see the same areas as areas of
14 need, or have we seen growth in those areas, and we need to change our focus? The SAU committee will
15 conduct a mid-year and end-of-year check-in to direct that work.

16
17 Asked to define self-management and self-awareness and how they relate, Assistant Superintendent
18 Bergskaug stated self-awareness is the ability to accurately recognize one's own emotions, thoughts, and
19 values and how they influence behavior. The ability to accurately assess one's strengths and limitations
20 with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and growth mindset. Identifying your emotions, self-
21 perception, recognizing your own strengths, self-efficacy. Self-management is the ability to successfully
22 regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations, effectively managing stress,
23 controlling impulses, and motivating one's self. The ability to set and work toward personal and academic
24 goals. Stress management, self-organizational skills. These are all things we have been teaching for years,
25 but what we are trying to do is utilize similar language so that when you go from class to class the student
26 isn't thinking there is this whole new set of rules I have to follow.

27
28 That is what we do in all of our academic areas; we build our vocabulary, have a solid understanding of
29 what was taught before and where we're going next. We just need to do that in this content area as well.

30
31 Ms. Sarris asked what the general receptiveness is. Through the survey, teachers have indicated that they
32 are not comfortable with these areas. Are they not comfortable in the sense that what they are being asked
33 to do reaches beyond their realm of education? Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug responded it is not
34 such a huge shift for all teachers; our elementary teachers have been doing it for years. Morning meeting is
35 the perfect time to have these conversations; taking a look at read aloud and then bringing in these strands,
36 but now doing it with a little bit more intention. She had thought that there would be a big difference in the
37 results based on schools, and although the data was analyzed by school, by age group, etc., it was
38 essentially unchanged. What she believes the issue to be is that potentially we are interpreting the question
39 a little bit differently.

40
41 This is something that the building groups will work towards, but it could be that it is that they are trying,
42 and the students are not necessarily getting it so the teacher feels he/she must need more help in this area.
43 Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug commented having that secondary background, she believes secondary
44 teachers are content teachers, they go to school for a particular content area, and SEL is not one of them.
45 There is a "how do you get everybody on board" learning curve or "that's great, that is what the school
46 counselor does, but I am here to talk about the civil war." There is no learning the civil war if you can't
47 access your day-to-day skills. If you are not available for learning, it doesn't matter how fantastic your
48 lesson is.

1 The keynote speaker on the professional development day really drove that point home; that it is not really
2 an option, it is not your job, its our job. Without that what we are doing is for nothing. Assistant
3 Superintendent Bergskaug commented she and Assistant Superintendent Thompson saw the presentation
4 about a year ago while attending an administrator conference. She had been struggling with how to bring
5 this to the public, convince the secondary group that it is part of their job. After listening to the
6 presentation it was clear this is how; it's about internal safety.

7
8 We are all on board with safety, we just needed to hear that message and hear that it is a direct link; internal
9 safety and understanding how to be a productive, healthy member of our community, and that we are all
10 part of that community and we need to make sure everyone is along with us.

11
12 Assistant Superintendent Thompson stated he has had a lot of conversations with teachers lately, and the
13 complexity of the needs of students in the last 5 years has really changed. We are seeing students with
14 challenging behaviors. Even chronic absenteeism, just getting kids to show up to school is a challenge. A
15 lot of the teachers he has spoken with are looking for resources. They realize that many of the strategies
16 they may have learned in their teacher preparation programs 5, 10, 15 years ago need to be more relevant to
17 be able to address those needs. He believes there to be a tremendous amount of buy-in.

18
19 Dana Ketchen, Finance Committee, asked where the funding for this comes from, and was informed the
20 bulk of the budget comes from grants. Ms. Ketchen noted the comment that the problems have increased in
21 the past 5 years, and asked if they have been able to identify why.

22
23 Assistant Superintendent Thompson responded there are a lot of reasons. He believes a lot of people would
24 say social media and increased use of technology and Smartphones has ironically created this huge
25 disconnect for a lot of our students. He has spoken with other Assistant Superintendents who will say they
26 are starting to see the impact of the opioid crisis. This crisis is now getting on in years and the children are
27 now starting to enter our schools. He probably could not narrow it down, but could spend all night talking
28 about root cause. We have a lot more students in our schools that are in foster care and a lot more students
29 being raised by grandparents. There are a lot of complex reasons, and as educators their job is to ensure
30 they are able to educate the students when they arrive in the District.

31
32 Chairman Maguire questioned if any of this work addresses the concept or start the foundation for getting
33 students to understand it is okay for people to have different viewpoints. One of the biggest concerns for
34 him with what is happening today, particularly when reaching college, is that students come across others
35 with a different viewpoint and cannot cope any longer. Part of the whole child focus needs to be that
36 everybody has their own viewpoints and that doesn't mean you can't be good friends, etc.

37
38 Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated that to be covered under social awareness. She agreed that is
39 being seen a bit more. She would be interested to see if that comes up more this year. She believes self-
40 management is always sort of an adolescent area of need.

41
42 Vice Chairman Haag commented on instances where students take a photo and post it on social media and
43 all of a sudden some student is cyber bullied. All of the ramifications of that type of activity need to be
44 understood. In the K-3 it is probably not present, but after that it is very real. Assistant Superintendent
45 Bergskaug commented they are seeing those issues arise earlier and earlier.

46 Ms. Sarris stated appreciation for the trauma aspect commenting a student that might appear to someone
47 else as a disengaged trouble maker is that student who can't access the information that is being put in front
48 of them. She questioned how we identify the difference between the student that is experiencing trauma.
49 She remarked she thinks it is simply the awareness of that component; this isn't simply someone looking to

1 cause trouble. She is pleased that is being talked about more and more as it is a challenging concept for a
2 lot of people. She would like to see that whole concept of trauma informed teaching come into play across
3 the board.
4

5 Ms. Marsano asked if a specific directed program is being looked at. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug
6 responded there is no one program that works for the SAU. They are pulling from a number of different
7 resources and trying to figure out what resonates the best. Although HUES and CSDA are working in
8 separate groups, there is communication between them so that information can be shared. They are all
9 focused in the same area, and trying to build what makes the most sense for our community.
10

11 Some of the work that started 3 years ago was working with the Office of Student Wellness in the
12 Department of Education. A pretty deep self-assessment was done, and we were in great shape. But that
13 doesn't mean we are done. We might be in better shape than other districts, but we have work to do. Our
14 profile is different from some high need districts.
15

16 Ms. Marsano commented she is in her master's for Clinical Mental Health Counseling. This is a topic that
17 is strongly within her. She is a little concerned that we keep building on asking our teachers to do more
18 and more. She understands it in the course of wellness and believes it is important, but at the same time she
19 wonders if we are supporting our teachers emotionally so that we don't have a teacher breakdown in the
20 middle of a classroom. We need to support our teachers.
21

22 Ms. Marsano commented out teachers have been astounding in identifying mental health issues for children
23 throughout the District, but she wants to understand that they are also supported in this. She saw that in the
24 Mission Statement, but we are so focused on the students and how they are doing, and not necessarily on
25 the teachers and how they are doing.
26

27 Assistant Superintendent Thompson remarked he believes that is what resonated with the Choose Love
28 presentation because the message was really about a community of care. That is students, teachers, parents,
29 etc. He stated agreement our teachers are asked to do a lot when it comes to dealing with students having
30 really complex needs. The whole concept of vicarious trauma; that as the responder to trauma you can put
31 yourself in a position, and we need to be very sensitive to that. One of the trainings that started two years
32 ago is mental health first aid training. It is a research-based program that is taught to educators and others.
33 It works off the same premise as CPR and first aid; that you provide immediate, emergency supports to
34 someone who is having a mental health crisis or someone who is choking as a stop gap measure until
35 someone professionally can attend to that. One of the strong messages with mental health fist aid is that
36 concept of the caregivers are often times overlooked and they need greater levels of support.
37

38 There is a high rate of burnout in the teaching profession to begin with, but when you talk about students
39 with such complex needs, we really need to be mindful of what we are doing for them as well.
40

41 Ms. Sarris questioned where we stand as a state in education in the world of SEL. The landscape is very
42 different. She questioned if we have looked to other states as models or do we feel we are going with the
43 flow? It seems there has been an increase in awareness over the past few years.

1 Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the Governor put a lot of attention in this area and it is identified
2 as a must for districts. In Massachusetts it is a requirement that every that they survey every student and
3 parent. While that is all well and good, New Hampshire has laws prohibiting the surveys. There is an
4 interesting perspective in the State of what the school is doing and what the home is doing. She sees it as
5 being a community. Everyone needs to be partners, but at the same time we want to respect privacy. She
6 believes the State has recognized that this is not just a trend, it is something that is here to stay, and we
7 need to address it.

8
9 Assistant Superintendent Thompson noted the Governor started an Emergency Preparedness Task Force.
10 The result of that work was a document that had 58 recommendations on how to improve safety and
11 security in schools. Most of the recommendations were not about physical safety. A few were about
12 cameras and security film. They were about mental health. He saw a shift, particularly with Homeland
13 Security, that works very closely with schools. When that report was released, there was a lot of focus on
14 SEL. They have moved away from that physical safety piece. He stated his belief, state-wide, it has been
15 about a year or so that the focus has really shifted to social emotional learning. Most of the safety trainings
16 they attend now are focused on that.

17
18 Dana Ketchen, Finance Committee, spoke of the list of resources, and asked if it is a physical list.
19 Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated it to be a Google spreadsheet. Ms. Ketchen works in healthcare,
20 and commented her employer has a list of resources and they provide them to crisis people. She questioned
21 if the resources are actually accessible to the people who need them when they need them. Assistant
22 Superintendent Bergskaug responded, as it is being used, it is updated/annotated. Different folks have
23 access to different resources for a variety of reasons. Assistant Superintendent Thompson remarked we
24 live in a state that has very insufficient services, outside of the schools. He provided the example of the
25 one substance treatment center for adolescents, which is now closed.

26
27 There are very limited resources. As a school district we have a ton of resources. This work with SEL
28 really is about creating systems for those resources to make sure they are utilized effectively. At the COOP
29 level, they have begun a partnership with an on-profit organization called Harbor Homes. They can come
30 into our schools and provide emergency mental health services. They also offer a variety of other services
31 including pediatric care, dental care, etc. This is mobile crisis response and other services as well. The
32 problem is Harbor Homes also operates in Nashua, which has a very large need as well. Those resources
33 can be spread pretty thin.

34 35 **DISCUSSION**

- 36
37 • Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Update

38
39 Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted the calendar for 2020 Annual Meeting Dates and Deadlines
40 highlights that the last day for negotiated cost items to be finalized is January 14th. That is where the
41 urgency stems from with regard to the possibility of requiring a special meeting.

42
43 The date of the Public Hearing is scheduled for January 21st, and the first Deliberative Session on February
44 3rd.

1 - Fiscal Year 2021 – New Items Requests

2
3 Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted changes that were made to the proposed budget line items.
4 Costs for the CSDA water filling stations (2) and the gym floor tarp replacement have been zeroed out.
5 The playground is now identified under the Maintenance Trust along with the cameras. The contingency
6 amount was changed from \$25,000 to \$40,000 to cover any transportation needs should they arise for
7 kindergarten. Based on new information relative to retirements, the budget was adjusted. The
8 Administration is recommending the kindergarten warrant article stay at \$143,000.
9 The operating budget is \$9,459,496, which represents a decrease of \$216,994.54 or 2.2% from the FY20
10 operating budget.

11
12 The Special Education Trust is proposed to be funded at \$25,000, the Maintenance Trust at \$75,000, and
13 Contingency at \$40,000. The Brookline portion of the SAU budget is \$319,460.00. The District is waiting
14 on a teachers' agreement. The kindergarten warrant would be at \$143,065.00. Were all of the articles to
15 pass, the total would be \$10,062,021.75. That represents a net decrease from the FY20 budget of
16 \$185,711.00 or a 1.8% reduction.

17
18 The adjusted/default budget is the amount of the same appropriations as contained in the operating budget
19 authorized for the previous year, reduced and increased, as the case may be, by debt service, contracts, and
20 other obligations previously incurred or mandated by law, and reduced by one-time expenditures contained
21 in the operating budget and by salaries and benefits of positions that have been eliminated in the proposed
22 budget.

23
24 Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug identified some of the impacts to the budget should it fail to pass, and
25 the default budget come into play (copy of information included with agenda). Should the proposed budget
26 not pass, the default budget (\$9,981,789) would come into play. The difference between the default and the
27 proposed budget is \$80,232.57.

28
29 Vice Chairman Haag stated the need to show in the presentation of the budget that the largest increases are
30 uncontrollable items. Often times that can be confusing to people that haven't been involved in this. The
31 information on the breakdown of contractual and obligations required by the State should be presented to
32 the taxpayers. There is not much that could be cut unless considering RIFs.

33
34 Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug commented she and the Business Administrator discussed how to
35 share that message. The presentation she is preparing for the Public Hearing has 2-3 slides on
36 mandated/beyond our control, and areas where there is some control.

37
38 Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted the boiler at CSDA will be addressed in the current year. It
39 cannot wait until next year.

40
41 Ms. Sarris stated agreement with the need to provide a clear depiction of the amount of costs that are
42 outside of the Board's control and that which is recommended by the Board.

43 - Brookline Warrant Article Discussion

44
45
46 Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated Article 2 is draft as it relates to the potential Collective
47 Bargaining Agreement. Article 3 would be the proposed kindergarten warrant article. There is not yet a
48 clear answer from the State about direction. The numbers listed represent a conservative approach to what
49 we know to be true; additional cost \$46,100, expected State funding \$120,535. Current parent-paid

1 revenues that would be lost \$217,500, revenue difference \$96,965, and net effect to the taxpayers of
2 \$143,065.

3
4 Asked if the transportation piece would be addressed relevant to the cost, she stated that to be a difficult
5 piece to add to this warrant article. The cost of additional transportation would be incurred should this
6 warrant article not pass. That is something that could be part of the discussion, but is difficult to put into
7 the language for this article.

8
9 Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug noted there is the potential for additional State funding. The \$143,065
10 could be reduced to \$105,000. As there is no confirmation of that, it is felt the most honest effort is in
11 identifying the \$143,065 as the net effect to the taxpayer.

12
13 Ms. Ketchen referred to the explanation provided for the items included and not included in a default
14 budget, and questioned if employees would land in the same contractual agreements the current teachers
15 are in. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated they are talking about a half-time teacher. The other
16 teachers are already full-time employees. The half-time teacher already is a full-time teacher with the
17 District, it is just that the half time is funded by a Federal grant. That half position (\$46,000; includes
18 benefits) is not funded by the budget, and a different funding source would have to be identified for the
19 needed position.

20
21 Article 4 is the operating budget. Article 5 is the \$25,000 allocation to the Special Education Expendable
22 Trust Fund. Article 6 is the allocation of \$75,000 to the School Facilities Maintenance Fund, Article 7 is
23 the Contingency allocation of \$40,000. Article 8 is the SAU assessment.

24
25 Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug commented on how the articles are funded in the order listed unless
26 and until the available funds are depleted. She questioned the will of the Board relative to the order.

27
28 Vice Chairman Haag suggested the Contingency article come 1st. It funds the full-day kindergarten. If it
29 doesn't pass it can go to one of the other two. Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the intent would
30 be that the Contingency would fund the transportation if full-day kindergarten were not to pass (another bus
31 would be needed for the mid-day routes). Vice Chairman Haag agreed it stay where it is.

32
33 Asked about the Special Education Trust, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated her belief the balance
34 is currently \$150,000. Ms. Marsano suggested moving this article to follow the maintenance trust fund
35 given the number of maintenance items to be addressed. Vice Chairman Haag stated agreement noting the
36 substantial Capital Improvement Plan. Ms. Sarris noted the Special Education Trust has been at the top of
37 the articles for the past three years. It is close to the target of \$250,000.

38
39 *The consensus of the Board was to switch the order of articles 5 and 6.*

40
41 - Fiscal Year 2021 – SAU Budget Update

42
43 Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated the SAU 41 Governing Board meeting would be conducted on
44 Monday, December 23rd at 6:00 p.m. at the Hollis Brookline Middle School. The meeting will include the
45 Public Hearing on the proposed FY21 budget.

1 **DELIBERATIONS**

- 2
- 3 • To see what action the Board will take regarding the Facility Use request by the Brookline
4 Women's Club

5

6 Principal Molinari spoke of having received a letter from the Brookline Women's Club on November 15th.
7 The letter read in part; "On behalf of the Brookline Women's Club, we would like to request the use of the
8 RMMS gymnasium on Saturday, April 18, 2020 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. In addition to space
9 reservation, we would like to request an exemption to some of the fees associated with the Community Use
10 of School Facilities & Fields policy.

11

12 The Brookline Women's Club is dedicated to community service work, the promotion of fellowship among
13 women, and the enhancement of the social and intellectual life of its members. The intended event to be
14 held on April 18th is a local vendor marketplace providing a one-stop shopping experience to the Hollis
15 Brookline community-at-large.

16

17 We have had significant growth and interest in the event over the past several years, and are hopeful to
18 expand in 2020 with the use of the gym. All funds generated from this function will allow the Brookline
19 Women's Club to continue doing impactful work within the community. We respectfully ask that you
20 consider waiving some of the fees that would be associated with the space reservation."

21

22 Chairman Maguire commented the length of this event will be less than the last one approved for a
23 reduction in the fees.

24

25 Asked what the approximate cost would be for the event, Principal Molinari stated it to be \$50/hr. for
26 custodial, \$10/hr. for utilities, and \$50 gym fee. The estimate was \$470.00.

27

28 What was done for the Lion's Club was a fee of \$100 and a \$100 refundable deposit.

29

30 Principal Molinari spoke of the funding support the Women's Club provided on the playground project,
31 e.g., funded the handicap accessible swings, their participation in the GaGa Pit at CSDA, etc.

32

33 Vice Chairman Haag commented the funds the group raises go back into the community.

34

35 Ms. Marsano asked and was informed that last year's event was held at the top floor of the Town Hall. The
36 event has grown, and parking becomes an issue. There is also more of an accessibility piece. Asked what
37 the fees are at the Town Hall, Assistant Superintendent Bergskaug stated there to be a \$50 fee for private
38 users and no fee for non-profit organizations. But there are parking restrictions.

39

40 Chairman Maguire commented on being supportive of reduced fees for groups that put funding back into
41 the community.

42

43 *The consensus of the Board was for a \$100 fee and a \$100 refundable deposit.*

44

45 Principal Molinari questioned the will of the Board relative to revisiting Policy KF. He suggested a review
46 of other groups from the past to see if they would fall into the same category. There is the need to be aware
47 of the budget as costs associated with these type of events is not accounted for in the operating budget.

1 Ms. Ketchen questioned the amount of the cost that would be incurred by the District if the fee is reduced
2 to \$100. Principal Molinari stated it to be \$420. For the penny sale the cost was approx. \$750. There are
3 2-3 events/school year.

4
5 Ms. Ketchen suggested, based upon the vendor turnout and the revenue gained, were the Women’s Club to
6 be made aware of the cost to the District, perhaps they could contribute a bit more. Principal Molinari
7 noted he is not familiar with the particulars of the event, and suggested additional information could be
8 sought and utilized when considering another such request next year.

9
10 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

11
12 Brookline School Board [November 20, 2019](#)

13
14 **MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ACCEPT, AS PRESENTED**

15 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER HOWIE**

16 **MOTION CARRIED**

17 **4-0-1**

18 *Member Marsano Abstained*

19
20 **NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

21
22 **MOTION BY MEMBER SARRIS THAT THE BOARD, BY ROLL CALL, GO INTO NON-**
23 **PUBLIC SESSION PURSUANT TO RSA 91-A:3 II (a) THE DISMISSAL, PROMOTION OR**
24 **COMPENSATION OF ANY PUBLIC EMPLOYEE AND (c) TO DISCUSS A MATTER, WHICH**
25 **IF DISCUSSED IN PUBLIC, WOULD LIKELY AFFECT ADVERSELY THE REPUTATION OF**
26 **A PERSON, OTHER THAN A MEMBER OF THE BODY OR AGENCY ITSELF**
27 **MOTION SECONDED BY MEMBER MARSANO**

28
29 *A Viva Voce Roll Call was conducted, which resulted as follows:*

30
31 Yea: Kenneth Haag, Rebecca Howie, Alison Marsano, Erin Sarris, Matthew Maguire

32 5

33 Nay:

34 0

35 **MOTION CARRIED**

36 *The Board went into non-public session at 7:44 p.m.*

37 *The Board came out of non-public session at 7:53 p.m.*

38
39 **ADJOURNMENT**

40
41 **MOTION BY MEMBER HAAG TO ADJOURN**

42 **SECONDED BY MEMBER HOWIE**

43 **MOTION CARRIED**

44 **5-0-0**

45
46 *The December 18, 2019 meeting of the Brookline School Board was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.*

47
48 Date _____ Signed _____