

**HOPKINTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**Thursday, March 19, 2015**  
**Regular Meeting 7:00 PM**  
**Middle School Library**  
**MINUTES**

School Committee Chair Jonathan Graziano opened the regular meeting at 7:01 PM with the following present:

Members:

Mr. Jonathan Graziano, Chair  
Ms. Ellen Scordino, Vice Chair  
Ms. Jean Bertschmann, Member  
Ms. Kelly Knight, Member  
Ms. Lori Nickerson, Member

Also Present:

Dr. Cathy MacLeod, Superintendent  
Mr. Robert Berlo, Assistant Superintendent  
Mr. Ralph Dumas, Director of Finance

**I. Pledge of Allegiance**

**II. Public Comments:** (taken out of order, after III.A.)

- Concern was expressed about the process leading to the vote on the 2015-2016 school calendar. Appreciation was expressed for the survey and the discussion that was generated. Request to restore Rosh Hashanah as a non-school day was made and an observation that many surrounding communities do not hold school on Jewish High Holidays was noted.
- Concern was expressed about holding school on religious holidays.

**III. Reports to the School Committee**

- A. High School Student Advisory Council Representative (taken out of order, after I.) Representative Jack Cote reports that the second de-stress week was held last week and included comfort dogs, volleyball in the gym, ping pong, art activities, karaoke, open gym, music at lunch, and trivia games. A blood drive was held on March 10, 2015 and 54 pints of blood were given; this was one of the most successful blood drives held by Student Council. The first Annual Trivia Night was held; the spring play, the Tempest, was held on March 13, 14, and 15; BeFree held their first handball club on Thursday March 12, 2015; Keep Smilin Day is tomorrow; chorus and band concerts will be held on March 23 and 24; MICCA (Massachusetts Instrumental & Choral Conductors Association) competition will be take place on March 27, 28 and 29; and Meb Keflezighi, who won the Boston Marathon in 2014, talked to students about his life's journey.
- B. Superintendent's Report
- Dr. MacLeod expressed appreciation to Tim Kilduff for his efforts to bring the opportunity for students and faculty to hear from Meb Keflezighi.
  - Dr. MacLeod expressed thanks to Jeannine Gilmore for the new format for the school calendar. School Committee members noted that the new format offered significant improvement for the readability of the calendar. Dr. MacLeod clarified that the three professional days in the school year are in addition to the required 180 student days.
- C. School Committee Chair Report –
- Budget season for the Town continues. The School Committee will meet on April 6, 2015 with the Appropriation Committee. The Capital Improvement Committee (CIC) requested information on the roof projects and a meeting with the School Committee will be scheduled. The Board of Selectmen (BOS) requested additional information on the Joint Safety and Security Article; after receiving the information the BOS indicated support of the Article. Ms. Bertschmann requested follow-up information on the rationale for

why the CIC and Town Manager did not recommend the resurfacing of the courts on the list of Capital Articles.

- The HPTA will hold the Family Fun Basket Raffle on Saturday, March 21, at Hopkins School. The HEF will hold the fundraiser Improv Hopkinton on Saturday, March 28, 2015. Destination Imagination teams will compete in Holliston on Saturday, March 21, 2015.

- D. ESBC – The next public forum is scheduled for Saturday, March 28, 2015 at 9 AM and will be held at the Senior Center. A signed, revised copy of the enrollment letter was sent to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). No further information has been received on whether or not the change in the enrollment number will affect the timeline for the project.
- E. HCA Easement Report – Mr. Chuck Joseph and Mr. Dan McIntyre were welcomed to the table. Mr. Joseph provided information on the easement which the Hopkinton Center for the Arts (HCA) is requesting from the school department for the construction of the fire system at the HCA. A pressure test for the performance of the pump and the system will be performed on Tuesday, April 21, 2015; if the results of the test are positive, the work will be completed during the final days of school spring break. Written confirmation of approval of the project by the Hopkinton Fire Chief was requested by Mr. Graziano. The School Committee will vote on the request for the easement at its first meeting in April.

#### IV. New Business – No new business this meeting

#### V. Old Business

- A. High School and Hopkins School Roof Updates – Dennis Basquill from Gale Associates was welcomed to the table. Gale Associates were hired to conduct existing conditions studies of the Hopkins and High School roofs for the purpose of obtaining a cost estimate for the Capital Article. Those estimates totaled \$681,881 which was used as the basis for reducing the Capital Warrant request from \$790,000. Recently, infrared scanning indicated that the roof of the High School gymnasium had a considerable amount of wet insulation and replacement of the roof is recommended. The cost to replace the gym roof and repair the remaining High School roof is \$793,000. The installation of the solar panels is the source of leaks in the gym roof. This is the second time leaks have occurred due to the solar panel installation. Follow-up after the first leaks noted that the installer is out of business but repair patches were made to the roof by Firestone. Dr. MacLeod and Mr. Dumas recommended the roof replacement over the gym and repair of the high school roof as first priority.

School Committee members asked clarifying questions. Concern was noted that there may be further damage to the building as long as the leaks are not fixed. The timeline for replacement and repair of the roof is 2016 as the project must follow the bid process. By general consensus the School Committee supported further investigation of the roof warranty and the company which installed the solar panels to determine if any funding might be available from those sources, and supported discussions with the Town about the projected funding sources for the Capital Warrant Articles.

On a motion made by Ms. Scordino, seconded by Ms. Nickerson, the School Committee voted to adjust the Capital Warrant Article for the Hopkins and High School Roof Repairs to \$1,114,000.

Vote: Favor: 5                      Oppose: 0                      Abstain: 0                      Absent: 0

- B. Elementary School Start Times – Dr. MacLeod reviewed the process over the past year to come to a solution for changing the staggered start times for Center, Elmwood and Hopkins Schools. Dr. MacLeod explained that currently students have a later start at Center School, an earlier start at Elmwood, and then a later start time at Hopkins. Dr. MacLeod stated that the goal for students is to have the start of the school day become earlier as they move up in grade level, with the earliest start time at the High School. Various scenarios were reviewed by the study group which consisted of members of the administration and faculty. This group determined that it is not possible to have Elmwood and Hopkins on the same start and end times because it causes a very late dismissal time at Center School. Dr. MacLeod recommended that the Hopkins School day start at 8:15 and end at 2:30 (currently the Elmwood School schedule) and that the Elmwood and Center Schools be on the same schedule, 9:00 to 3:15. Dr. MacLeod explained that this recommendation is based on what is best for the education of

students, with the understanding that this change will require the faculty at Elmwood School to make changes about which they expressed uneasiness.

On a motion made by Ms. Knight, seconded by Ms. Nickerson, the School Committee voted to approve the recommendation to adjust the school day at Hopkins School to run from 8:15 to 2:30 and at Center and Elmwood Schools to run from 9:00 to 3:15 for the 2015-2016 school year.

Vote: Favor: 4                      Oppose: 1 (Scordino)                      Abstain: 0                      Absent: 0

- C. Discussion of 2015-2016 School Year Calendar – Ms. Scordino explained her request to have the School Committee re-examine the 2015-2016 calendar specifically around the treatment of Jewish holidays. Ms. Scordino reviewed the information in Robert’s Rules of Order and from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) on the procedure to reconsider or rescind a motion that was approved at an earlier meeting. Based on this information a motion to reconsider or amend is procedurally acceptable within specific parameters. Ms. Scordino suggested forming a group to study the history of observing these days as holidays and how the change in observance would affect families in the community. By law the school calendar is required to be approved by the School Committee before the end of March. Ms. Bertschmann questioned the precedent that will be set by the Committee with the reconsideration of an approved motion, and the criteria needed to reconsider motions in the future. Ms. Nickerson suggested that the study group examine all religious holidays observed by Hopkinton community members

On a motion made by Ms. Scordino, seconded by Ms. Knight, the School Committee deliberated a motion to rescind the action taken regarding the 2015-2016 school year calendar.

Ms. Scordino withdrew the motion based on the Committee’s uneasiness with the requirements to rescind a prior vote.

On a second motion made by Ms. Scordino, seconded by Ms. Knight, the School Committee voted on a motion to amend the 2015-2016 school calendar to have no school on September 14, 2015 and no school on March 25, 2016 adding two school days in June, making the last day of school June 17, 2016. A clarification was made that the 2 additional early release days will be added to the school calendar if the amendment is approved.

Vote: Favor: 2 (Scordino, Knight)                      Oppose: 3                      Abstain: 0                      Absent: 0

While the motion did not pass, by general consensus the School Committee supported the formation of a study group for this topic. School Committee members noted that the approval of the calendar was based on Dr. MacLeod’s recommendation that it was the best educational plan for the district. School Committee members expressed concerns about setting a precedent of reversing a previously voted motion, and the criteria upon which those decisions could be made.

## VI. Public Comments

- Point of order question was raised about the need for this motion to be a 2/3’s vote compared to the approval of the 2015-2016 calendar at the previous meeting. Ms. Bertschmann responded by saying that the topic was not on the agenda for tonight’s meeting and thus required the 2/3’s vote. Appreciation was expressed for the debate on the calendar and observed that substitute teachers will be needed to cover teachers on these holidays.
- Opinion was expressed that new information about the importance of Rosh Hashanah had been presented.
- Support was expressed for the creation of a group to study all religious holidays and their observance in the district.

## VII. Items by Consensus:

- A. The Superintendent recommends the School Committee vote to approve the Operating Budget & Other Funds Warrant #15-047 in the amount of \$213,749.69
- B. The Superintendent recommends the School Committee vote to approve the High School Student Activities Warrant #15-048 in the amount of \$5,242.82.

*(Voted to accept 8/5/15)*

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- C. The Superintendent recommends the School Committee vote to approve \$1,900.03 from the “The Sky’s the Limit” fundraiser to be placed in the Middle School Gift Account as indicated in the agenda materials.
- D. The Superintendent recommends the School Committee vote to approve \$452.12 from Target’s “Take Charge of Education” program to be placed in the Hopkins School Gift Account as indicated in the agenda materials.

On a motion made by Ms. Bertschmann, seconded by Ms. Scordino the School Committee voted to approve items VII. A – D.

Vote: Favor: 5                      Oppose: 0                      Abstain: 0                      Absent: 0

**VIII. Adjournment**

On a motion made by Ms. Bertschmann, seconded by Ms. Nickerson, the School Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.

Vote: Favor: 5                      Oppose: 0                      Abstain: 0                      Absent: 0

The meeting was adjourned at 9:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jonathan Graziano, Chair  
Ellen Scordino, Vice Chair