

Approved

**Hudson School Committee
Open Session Minutes**

Meeting Date: May 24, 2016

Location: Administration Building
155 Apsley Street

Members present: Michele Tousignant Dufour, Jennifer O'Brien , George Luoto,
Elizabeth Hallsworth and Steven Smith

Members absent: Glenn Maston
Allyson Hay
Alicia Sagastume, Student Representative

Others present: Dr. Jodi Fortuna, Superintendent
Julia M. Pisegna, Recording Secretary

I. Call the Meeting to Order – 7:02 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair, Michele Tousignant Dufour.

II. Approval of Minutes:

Regular Meeting – May 10, 2016: A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. O'Brien and seconded by Mr. Smith. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

III. Public Participation:

None.

IV. Reports:

Student Representative Report:

None.

Superintendent's Report – Dr. Jodi Fortuna

District Leadership Team Meeting

The District Leadership Team focused on identifying the connections between the District's focus areas for improvement. The team came up with some great visuals to represent the work. Each representation had student learning at the core.

The District Leadership Team also spent time discussing the results from the School Committee's staff survey. The team reviewed the results and looked for patterns among the narrative input generated by our teachers. The clearest patterns found were that the high school wrote more narrative comments than the other levels. The staff in the District does not feel that there has been adequate communication about the budget. The staff at different levels and in different departments feel that their input into decision making is valued to different degrees. Given this analysis, the District will work, as a team, to develop standard practices that address the issues raised. (Element 4-D2)

Finance and Operations

Budget

The Committee will vote on the recommended budget reductions that were presented at the last meeting. These reductions should result in the District being able to pass a balanced budget in June. (Element 2E-1)

Walker Partnerships Review of Special Education

As previously indicated, the Walker Partnerships will present their findings of the comprehensive study of special education programs in the District that the District undertook earlier this year. This is an important presentation as the recommendations from the report will form the foundation of a Special Education Strategic Improvement Plan. (Element 3B-1)

District ListServ

The District is developing a District level ListServ as part of the District goal to increase communication with the community and families. Families and community members, who wish to do so, can sign up for regular updates about more routine matters at the District level such as budget, Superintendent reports and School Committee agendas. The District will continue to use the School Messenger program to inform parents of more important occurrences that have an immediate impact. (Element 3C-1)

Curriculum and Instruction Update

End of the Year

The District is rapidly approaching the end of the school year. The team's curriculum work will be completed by the June 16th deadline. As specified, the District will then transition from the "what" of the standards to the "how" to teach so that every child in Hudson is prepared to take advantage of all options available to them after high school. Whether they choose college, career, the military or an option we can't imagine yet, students will be ready to start the next chapter of their lives as academically confident and intellectually curious citizens. (Element 1A-1)

Our Kids

Dr. Fortuna attended the M.A.S.S. Spring Meeting. The keynote speaker was Robert Putnam, public policy professor at Harvard University. Dr. Putnam has served as an advisor to the past several administrations on important issues of public policy. Last year, he published a book “Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis” this book explores the opportunity gap for children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

Dr. Fortuna was so moved and intrigued by his presentation that she immediately purchased a copy of the book. After previewing it, and if it is as enlightening as anticipated, Dr. Fortuna would like to work with the School Committee to develop a book group with other local leaders around the implications of the research and possible actions that the community of Hudson can take to lessen the opportunity gap. (Element 4-D2)

School Committee’s Invitation to Senior Activities

Dr. Fortuna and Dr. Reagan extended an invitation to the Committee for the following events to honor the graduating seniors.

Tuesday, May 31

Baccalaureate

7:00-9:00 p.m. HHS Auditorium

This is a celebratory event held in the auditorium designed to commemorate the high school experiences of the class. Seniors process into the auditorium wearing their gowns (no caps) and sit in the audience as many of their classmates read poems and perform musical numbers. The performances usually focus on a particular theme. The event ends with the traditional senior slideshow.

Wednesday, June 1

Scholarship and Award Night

7:00 – 9:00 p.m. HHS Auditorium

At this event, several awards are presented, including college book awards for juniors, scholastic art and writing awards, departmental achievement awards and special senior class awards, as well as scholarship winners from the graduating class. Some scholarships are presented by the community members who actually sponsor the scholarships. This is a nice celebration of academic achievement and individual character.

Sunday, June 5

Graduation

1:00-2:30 p.m.

HHS Gymnasium

The procession begins at 1:00 p.m. Seats are reserved in the front of the gym for members of the administration and the School Committee. Most of the speaking at graduation is done by the graduates themselves, including the valedictorian and salutatorian.

Superintendent's Items of Interest

By the Numbers: May 10-20, 2016 (Element 3C-1)

- 5 parent phone conferences
- 1 Government official phone conference
- 1 Meeting with School Committee Chair
- 9 meetings with individual staff members
- 2 school visit for 3 hours each
- 6 meetings with individual Administrators
- 4 meetings with groups of Administrators
- 50 Email Conversations (at least 3 exchanges in conversation)
- 112 Email Exchanges (No more than 2 exchanges in each interaction)
- 10 Tweets
- 15 Facebook Posts
- M.A.S.S. Annual Spring President's Meeting
- Mulready 50th Anniversary Celebration
- HEA End of Year Retirement Party

Subcommittee Reports:

None.

V. Matters for Discussion:

1. **Dual Language Program – Minerva Gonzalez, Vice President of the Massachusetts Association for Bilingual Education**

Minerva Gonzalez, Vice President of the Massachusetts Association for Bilingual Education and Phyllis Hardy, Director of Advocacy and Extension Activities, presented to Committee members on Dual Language Education.

Their presentation highlighted that Dual Language Programs foster bilingualism and biliteracy enhanced awareness of cultural diversity and high levels of academic achievement through instruction in two languages.

They explained the types of Dual Language Programs as being one-way immersion and two-way immersion of foreign language with a program option of design for 50:50 or 90:10, initial literacy development and self-contained or team teaching staffing practices.

Ms. Gonzalez and Ms. Hardy shared that research noted that Dual Language Programs are the only programs that assist students to fully reach the 50th percentile in both their first and

second languages in all subjects and to maintain that level or higher through the end of schooling.

Mr. Luoto thanked Ms. Gonzalez and Ms. Hardy for their presentation and feels that Hudson should be looking into the possibility of Dual Language Programs in the future.

Committee Chair, Michele Tousignant Dufour, noted that it was an interesting presentation and food for thought, both as a Committee member and as a parent of Hudson students, and thanked Ms. Gonzalez and Ms. Hardy for their presentation.

2. Walker Partnerships Presentation – Dr. James Earley, Managing Director of Walker Partnerships

James Earley, Managing Director and Edward McCaul, Northcentral Region Associate Manager of Walker Partnerships shared with Committee members their District-wide Special Education Program Evaluation on the Department of Student Services report.

Their report included the methodology and review of pertinent written documents, walk through of all the schools with Principals and visits to special education instructional settings, observations of specific special education programs and inclusion setting, and interviews with school-based personnel, general and special education staff, administrators, Principals, parents, Superintendent of Schools and the Director of Student Services, as well as an exit interview with the Director of Student Services and the Superintendent.

The report included 28 specific commendations recognizing specific programs, approaches and efforts made by administration and staff in serving the needs of students with disabilities and factors which effect Special Education Programming and services.

The report indicated 20 findings as a result of the review of documentation, walk through and interviews, and noted that these 20 findings are the foundation for the recommendations. There were also 16 recommendations that address areas such as program development, team chairperson position, co-teaching and in-classroom support, pre-referral process and tiered system of support, as well as professional development for all school personnel and parental awareness and training to name a few.

Mr. Earley and Mr. McCaul thanked Dr. Fortuna and Cathy Kilcoyne for their hard work and commitment to the children of Hudson and for their assistance on this assignment.

Discussion ensued.

Committee members thanked Mr. Earley and Mr. McCaul for their presentation.

Dr. Fortuna announced that the Walker Report is on the District website for all to review.

VI. Matters for Action:

1. Approval of FY17 School Budget Cuts

Dr. Fortuna advised Committee members at the last meeting of the \$305,294.00 budget reductions that the administration team made and that with all budgets, that figure is subject to change. Dr. Fortuna advised the Committee that there may also be potential cuts also made in June.

Discussion ensued.

Dr. Fortuna recommended approval of the FY17 School Budget cuts in the amount of \$305,294.00.

A motion to approve the FY17 school budget cuts in the amount of \$305,294.00 was made by Ms. O'Brien and seconded by Mr. Luoto. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

2. Approval of Contract with Atlantic Construction & Management, Inc. in the Amount of \$10,500.00 for the Re-Roof Project at the J.L. Mulready Elementary School

Dr. Fortuna recommended approval of the Contract with Atlantic Construction & Management, Inc. in the amount of \$10,500.00 for the Re-Roof Project at the J.L. Mulready Elementary School.

A motion to approve the contract with Atlantic Construction & Management, Inc. in the amount of \$10,500.00 was made by Mr. Luoto and seconded by Mr. Smith. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

Reclassifications:

A motion to approve the reclassifications of funds, as presented, was made by Mr. Luoto and seconded by Ms. O'Brien. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

Items of Interest to the School Committee:

Committee Chair, Michele Tousignant Dufour, presented to Committee members updates to their subcommittee assignments.

A motion to approve the subcommittee assignments, as presented, was made by Mr. Luoto and seconded by Ms. Hallsworth. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

Ms. Hallsworth thanked Dr. Fortuna for having the meeting agendas available on the Town website which the community can now subscribe to.

Mr. Luoto shared with Committee members a recent article in the Boston Globe, *Work Hard, Go to College, Get Ahead*, for their review.

Ms. O'Brien shared that the 50th celebration of the J.L. Mulready Elementary School was a wonderful event and thanked the community for their turnout.

Approved

Dr. Fortuna also thanked Principal Whitmore for a great job putting the event together.

VI. Executive Session/Adjournment

At 8:58 p.m., Committee Chair, Michele Tousignant Dufour, noted that there was no need for an Executive Session

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. O'Brien and seconded by Ms. Hallsworth.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Hallsworth, Secretary
Hudson School Committee