

Approved

**Hudson School Committee
Open Session Minutes**

Meeting Date: March 22, 2016

Location: Administration Building
155 Apsley Street

Members present: Jennifer O'Brien, Michele Tousignant Dufour, George Luoto, Allyson Hay, Glenn Maston and Elizabeth Hallsworth

Members absent: Brian Davis
Alicia Sagastume, Student Representative

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

I. Call the Meeting to Order – 7:03 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair, Jennifer O'Brien.

Committee Chair Jennifer O'Brien began the meeting with a moment of silence to remember Massachusetts State Trooper Thomas Clardy.

II. Approval of Minutes:

Regular Meeting – March 8, 2016: A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Luoto and seconded by Ms. Hallsworth. On a vote of 6-0, 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 meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 22nd was cancelled so that Dr. Fortuna, Dr. Reagan and Mr. Webster could attend the funeral service for Massachusetts State Trooper Thomas Clardy.

Finance and Operations

Water Quality at Mulready

Dr. Fortuna informed the Committee last week that two Hudson High School students, Sam Tipps and Josh Teixeira, conducted water testing at three of the schools in the District as part of their State Science Fair Project.

At Mulready School, they tested water from all of the drinking fountains. One sample from a specific fountain tested with elevated levels of lead. The students took another sample of water from the drinking fountain and found that the levels of lead were all within normal limits.

The District has requested that Microbac Labs, the lab that tests the Town water, to complete testing of the water from all Mulready drinking fountains early on a Monday morning when the first draw would be after the school was closed for a weekend. This would allow us to determine if sediment was collecting in the water held in the unit during periods of inactivity.

The first draw sampling is scheduled for Monday, March 28th. The current plan is for all twelve drinking fountains to be tested for the first draw and the Microbac team would take additional samples later in the day, resulting in quality information to base the District's plan of action, if necessary, at the Mulready location.

Dr. Fortuna noted that it was important to reiterate that the decision to close the water fountains was done out of an overabundance of caution due to a test result that could not be replicated and, in fact, was well within normal limits. The District could have chosen not to act at all. Dr. Fortuna felt that given the outstanding scholarship and diligence of these students, it was determined that we would be overly cautious until we had results from a professional lab.

Dr. Fortuna will continue to update the Committee with any additional information received.

Air Quality Test at Quinn

The District continues to await the final results from the air quality test at Quinn Middle School. The teacher, paraeducators, and students have returned to the classroom and there has not been a repeat of the allergy symptoms.

District Newsletter: Honor Roll

District Communications and Development Coordinator Denise Reid has completed the first edition of the District's new community newsletter the "Honor Roll". The newsletter has been posted online. Color copies have been distributed to the Senior Center and the community rooms of local housing designed for active adults that do not have students attending our schools.

Approved

Dr. Fortuna noted that it is terrific to have so many of the District's accomplishments compiled in one place.

Curriculum Review Task Force

ELL Family Night

On Wednesday, March 16th at Forest Avenue, the District held ELL Family Night. The focus was on bilingualism with the goals of helping parents to understand the importance of bilingualism, identify some myths and truths about language development for bilingual children, and support their children's language development at home. The format for the night was an informational presentation, activities with families, and dinner. There was a record attendance of approximately 40 individuals representing 14 families. Families were eager to learn, read, and play games with their children in their first languages and were quite appreciative of the games and books they were able to take home. The elementary English Language Learning teachers made this happen with their collaboration and dedication. Dr. Fortuna extended her appreciation for all of the hard work they put into this event.

Preschool Update and Parent Meeting

The preschool enrollment at the Hubert School has been very successful. In just three days, 60 families had registered. There were several families who attended the informational night regarding the District's preschool partnership with CHAPS. The families raised issues around the lateness and lack of communication while the decision was being made. They asked several great questions about the program structure and the curriculum that CHAPS students would receive.

At the conclusion of the meeting, parents felt heard and expressed their gratitude for the District's willingness to be present and answer the tough questions. The majority of parents present were tuition paying parents. They expressed uneasiness about not having a decision regarding where their child attended preschool.

Dr. Fortuna and Steve Freitas were very clear that there were many wonderful choices, however, staying at Hudson High School was not one of them. Another parent requested that we add Hubert School to the District App, which has been completed. One mother requested that an air quality test be conducted at Hubert based on some information that she had heard regarding mold and a wet basement.

Mr. Freitas reported that in the several years that CHAPS has occupied the Hubert School, there have been no respiratory issues.

Dr. Fortuna noted that if this is the direction that the School Committee wishes to pursue, to please let her know and Mr. Belli would get a quote. Dr. Fortuna referenced the tests conducted on the two rooms at Quinn had the price tag of approximately \$1,500.

Dr. Fortuna thanked Ms. O'Brien and Ms. Tousignant Dufour for attending the event.

Kindergarten Registration Update

The District postponed the kindergarten lottery scheduled for Monday, March 21st. The lottery will now be held on Monday, March 28th at 6:30 p.m. at the Apsley Street Administration Building. The current numbers for kindergarten in the 2016-2017 school year are:

- Farley: 45 interested in full day and 23 interested in 1/2 day
Current configuration is three sections of ½ day and two sections of full day
- Forest: 36 interested in full day and 19 interested in 1/2 day
Current configuration is two sections of ½ day and two sections of full day
- Mulready: 24 interested in full day and 9 interested in 1/2 day
Current configuration is two sections of ½ day and one section of full-day

There was some concern that many of the District's ELL families have not registered. District K-7 Registrar, Renee Graca, and English Language Learning Coordinator, Erin Goldstein, continue working to develop strategies to reach out to these families.

Discussion ensued.

Superintendent's Items of Interest

UNESCO Research Trip to Portugal

Dr. Fortuna shared that Committee members had received a letter of explanation from Mr. Peter Vacchina regarding why the High School will not be sending a delegation to the UNESCO conference this year. This is a conference that was supported by the Hudson community and School Committee.

Both Dr. Fortuna and Mr. Vacchina felt strongly that the School Committee and community should know as soon as possible what went awry. This was a very disappointing chain of events, and the District remains hopeful that it can send a delegation to the 2018 conference.

William Spratt Award for Excellence in Teaching Secondary Social Studies

The William Spratt Award for Excellence in Teaching Secondary Social Studies award is presented annually to one educator in Massachusetts who has demonstrated excellence in the field of social studies.

Dr. Fortuna announced that the recipient of this year's prestigious award is Hudson High School Teacher, Caitlin Murphy. Caitlin was chosen for this recognition because of her professional involvement in activities that ranks "among the very best".

In the letter announcing the award, the Executive Board for the Massachusetts Council for the Social Studies cites how Caitlin has "incorporated innovative and effective instructional strategies and techniques, and has fostered a spirit of democratic beliefs and values."

Approved

Caitlin will receive her award on Monday, April 4th at the Northeast Regional Conference for the Social Studies.

Dr. Fortuna congratulated Ms. Murphy for all her work and receiving such a prestigious award.

Special Olympics

The MetroWest Special Olympics Track and Field events will be held on Friday, April 15th at Bowditch Field located on the campus of Framingham State University. The rain date will be Friday, April 29th.

Dr. Fortuna invited members of the Committee to attend this wonderful event.

Guest Reader Mulready

On Friday, March 9th, Dr. Fortuna was the guest reader in four different classrooms at Mulready Elementary during the finale of their Dr. Seuss Spirit Week.

Dr. Fortuna shared how wonderful the students were and how much fun it was, and thanked all of the students and teachers that welcomed her into their classrooms.

Enrollment

All enrollment numbers are up to date. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education collects enrollment data in October, March and June.

Subcommittee Reports:

None.

Matters for Discussion:

V.

1. Update on Kindergarten Registration – Dr. Jodi Fortuna

Dr. Fortuna discussed the update on Kindergarten registration during her Superintendent's Report and noted that there will also be a presentation with updated information at the next scheduled School Committee meeting on April 12th.

Discussion ensued.

VI. Matters for Action:

1. Approval of Out of State Travel for Dr. Jodi Fortuna to Attend the Hudson High School Drama Society Field Trip to New York on April 12-13, 2016:

Dr. Fortuna requested approval for out of state travel to attend, as an administrative chaperone, the Hudson High School Drama Society Field Trip to New York on April 12-13, 2016.

A motion to approve the out of state travel for Dr. Fortuna to attend the Hudson High School Drama Society Field Trip to New York on April 12-13, 2016 was made by Mr. Luoto and seconded by Mr. Maston. On a vote of 6-0, the motion passed.

Reclassifications:

None.

Items of Interest to the School Committee:

Mr. Luoto shared with Committee members information on the conference he attended on Dual Language Education. He was very impressed and would like for the District to pursue this further.

Discussion ensued.

Ms. O'Brien shared that the Chorus Festival held at the High School was an amazing event, and she had such a sense of pride when they sang Happy Birthday to Hudson.

Ms. Tousignant Dufour shared that some chorus students attended the Boston Bruins games and had a fantastic time. The students sang a song and were on the jumbo-tron.

Ms. Hay attended the Band Fest and shared that it was a wonderful event. The students did a great job, and the parents knew all the songs.

Mr. Luoto reminded Committee members of the 'If Only' event being held on Wednesday, April 6th at the Grace Baptist Church.

VI. Executive Session/Adjournment

At 7:28 p.m., Committee Chair, Jennifer O'Brien, noted that there was need for an Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to preparation for contract negotiations with union personnel because an open session may have a detrimental effect on the legal position, of the Committee.

A motion to enter into Executive Session was made by Ms. Hay and seconded by Ms. Tousignant Dufour.

Approved

Vote by roll call:

Ms. O'Brien – yes

Ms. Tousignant Dufour – yes

Mr. Luoto - yes

Ms. Hay – yes

Mr. Maston – yes

Ms. Hallsworth – yes

Committee Chair Jennifer O'Brien announced that the Committee would enter Executive Session and not return to public session.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Hallsworth, Secretary
Hudson School Committee