

Approved

**Hudson School Committee
Open Session Minutes**

Meeting Date: February 9, 2016

Location: Administration Building
155 Apsley Street

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

Members absent: Brian Davis
George Luoto

Others present: Dr. Jodi Fortuna, Superintendent
Julia M. Pisegna, Recording Secretary
Alicia Sagastume, Student Representative

I. Call the Meeting to Order – 7:05 p.m.

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

II. Approval of Minutes:

None.

III. Public Participation:

None.

IV. Reports:

Student Representative Report:

Student Representative, Alicia Sagastume, updated the Committee on events going on at the High School, including a Valentine's Day fundraiser. Ms. Sagastume announced that the Hudson High School Drama Society will present *Spamalot* for their spring musical scheduled for the first weekend in March.

Ms. Sagastume also presented all Committee members with a DVD of the Hudson High School Peru trip. Students are busy preparing fundraising for their next trip.

Superintendent's Report – Dr. Jodi Fortuna

District Leadership Team Meeting

The District Leadership Team meetings continue to be productive. The group has continued to work on sharpening skills to provide high quality descriptive feedback to teachers so that teachers find it useful and applicable to their practice and work as a team to improve teaching and learning.

The Team also continues working to address concerns brought forward by teachers regarding the collection of evidence. The District Leadership Team has worked to norm expectations for teachers' collection of evidence and accompanying narrative. There will be consistent expectations, outlined in guidelines, for the next round of evidence submission.

The Team has also spent time further defining best practices related to educator evaluation element IA4:

(Well-Structured Lessons): Develops well-structured lessons with challenging, measurable objectives and appropriate student engagement strategies, pacing, sequence, activities, materials, resources, technologies, and grouping.

The Team synthesized their knowledge from learning visits conducted earlier this school year, the work the Leadership Team did last summer to define the standards, the work teachers did to define the standards at the beginning of this year, and the work that the High Expectations Task Force has done to define the standards.

The goal is to create a single document with a common language to be used throughout the District in order to insure consistently well-structured lessons resulting in student learning. The Team's next steps are to develop a plan for communicating with teachers and obtain their feedback.

Finance and Operations

Mulready Roof Bid

On Thursday, February 4th, general bids were opened for the replacement of the Mulready Elementary School roof. Out of the 11 firms that pulled bidding documents, eight responded with a bid. The bids ranged from a low of \$705,000 to the high of \$1,523,000 with most bids clustered around \$944,000 to \$1,020,000. The District has not formally been notified by the low bidder that he will withdraw his bid due to an arithmetic error, but he did state this to the OPM when notified of the bid results by telephone.

The second low bidder at \$944,000 is well within the budgeted amount for construction cost and includes a number of refinements to the existing school like skylights in all the classrooms, some miscellaneous masonry repairs, repairs to the entrance canopy and the replacement of the rear entrance overhang.

The tight clustering of the bids (less the high and low) is a testimony to the quality of the bidding documents prepared by the architect, Raymond Design Associates.

Curriculum and Instruction Update

High Expectations Teaching

The High Expectations Teaching Task Force met on Monday, February 1st. Teacher participation in this group continues to be low. The group watched several video clips provided by Research for Better Teaching. “Research for Better Teaching (RBT) is a professional development organization dedicated to the professionalization of teaching. Founded in 1979 by Jonathon Saphier, Ed.D. RBT works to strengthen organizational culture and to institutionalize the study of teaching within schools and throughout school districts.” (RBTteach.org 2/5/16) Dr. Fortuna noted that the low participation of teachers on this committee continues to be a concern.

The High Expectations Task Force is weighing two options to move towards the District Improvement Plan Strategic Objective of: *Establish and maintain a learning environment based on a common understanding of high expectations among staff, students, and families.*

The first option is having RBT come to the District to teach their graduate level class HIGH-EXPECTATIONS TEACHING: “Smart is Something You Can Get”. Participants will learn how to choose language, develop classroom structures, and use instructional strategies to motivate all students, but particularly to get low-performing, low-confidence students to change their stereotype about themselves. The goals of the pedagogy in this class are to create a learning environment where students will:

- Believe effort is the main determinant of success;
- Learn how to exert effective effort;
- Decide to invest in school;
- Feel empowered in their learning; and
- Achieve more

The second option is to work with the “Teach Like a Champion” train the trainer model to move the District’s work forward. The “Teach Like a Champion” team is part of Uncommon Impact, Uncommon Schools' initiative to share knowledge, experience, and research about all students, particularly those not born to privilege, to achieve at dramatically higher levels.

Through ongoing field research and workshops, Teach Like a Champion’s team of educators is continually developing new understandings of how teachers, who "teach like champions", accelerate powerful student learning. (teachlikeachampion.com 2/5/16)

The District would begin with the Behavior and Culture module. The Behavior and Culture module is designed to build classrooms with strong behavior and culture in order to enable rigorous and engaging academic instruction to thrive. In this train the trainer model, participants will gain:

- An understanding of proven teaching skills that drive student achievement;
- Insights when describing the effective application of techniques by champion teachers;
- An understanding of the importance of practicing new techniques with teachers;
- A framework for what makes practice effective;
- Practice activities that will strengthen teachers' capacity to apply effective techniques in their classrooms; and
- The opportunity to plan how you will implement these techniques in your school's professional development program (teachlikeachampion.com 2/5/16)

At the Task Force's next meeting, the group will determine which approach best meets the needs of the District and move the District strategy for improvement forward. Once the decision is made, the work of this Task Force will be completed.

Superintendent's School Visits:

Quinn Middle School – January 20th
Forest Avenue School – January 28th

Superintendent's Items of Interest

Visit with District and School Assistance Center (DSAC) Director - Joseph Connors

The District's level 3 designation entitles it to additional support from the Central Mass DSAC. This support takes the form of financial assistance to offer professional learning opportunities in the summer, as well as potential professional learning opportunities. This meeting has occurred annually. This meeting was unique in that Dr. Connors was inquiring about how the District has achieved the success that it has at Farley. The consistent improvement at Farley has been at a rate that has drawn positive attention from the DSAC and the purpose of the meeting was to uncover what parts of the District's improvement strategy could be replicable to other Districts.

Dr. Fortuna looks forward to the continued forward momentum of the District, full of wonderful educators and notes that every day she continues to see growth and learning in the administrators, teachers, and students.

Meeting with River's Edge Arts Alliance Director

Dr. Fortuna continues to be excited by the renewed relationship with the River's Edge Arts Alliance. Director Kat Gadreau who reached out to communicate that the REAA will be moving their summer program to Assabet Valley RVTHS.

Dr. Fortuna was very appreciative of the advanced notice, as it is a win-win situation for all involved, and noted that as the Committee is aware, Mulready will be offline this summer as the roof is replaced. This necessitates the District relocating many of our summer programs. Having the REAA programs at Assabet Valley RVTHS will provide the District with more flexibility to do this.

Meeting with Jessica Healy Regional Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator

Dr. Fortuna reported that the Hudson Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (HYSAP) has a new coordinator, Jessica Healy. Dr. Fortuna met with Ms. Healy to discuss her views on the needs of the community when it comes to substance abuse prevention and gave Dr. Fortuna the opportunity to highlight the work that is happening in the Hudson Public Schools around substance abuse prevention.

Dr. Fortuna was invited to be on the community panel after the community screening of “If Only”, a film detailing the dangers of prescription drug abuse. The event will be held on Wednesday, April 6th at 6:00 p.m. at the Grace Baptist Church.

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:

Ms. O’Brien reported that the Policy Subcommittee had met and continues their work on several draft policies.

IV. Matters for Discussion:

1. Presentation of the 2016 Superintendent’s Academic Achievement Award:

Dr. Fortuna announced the recipient of the 2016 Superintendent’s Academic Achievement Award is Scott Kall. Scott and his parents were in attendance to receive this award. Mr. and Mrs. Kall thanked Dr. Fortuna and the Hudson Public Schools for this honor.

Committee members and student representative Alicia Sagastume congratulated Scott for his accomplishments.

2. Introduction of the New Hudson Public Schools App – Ellen Schuck

Ellen Schuck, Director of Technology, introduced to Committee members the new app for the Hudson Public Schools and demonstrated some of the features available on it, including, District news, District events, quick access to all school contact information, and the option to customize the app for your particular child’s school.

Committee members thanked Ellen for all her hard work and were excited to try the new app out.

3. Pre-approval of the School Calendar for 2016-2017

Dr. Fortuna presented to the Committee the proposed draft school calendar for 2016-2017.

Discussion ensued.

Dr. Fortuna noted that approval of the 2016-2017 school calendar will be tabled for vote at the next scheduled School Committee meeting on February 23, 2016.

Committee Chair, Jennifer O'Brien, noted that the Matters for Action items would be taken out of order.

V. **Matters for Action:**

1. Approval of Hudson High School GPA and Class Rank

Dr. Fortuna recommended approval of the Hudson High School GPA and Class Rank.

A motion to approve the Hudson High School GPA and Class Rank was made by Ms. Hay and seconded by Ms. Tousignant Dufour. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

2. Approval of Hudson High School Overnight Field Trip to the State Leadership Conference of the Business Professionals of America in Marlborough, Massachusetts on March 5-7, 2016

Dr. Fortuna recommended approval of the Hudson High School overnight field trip to the State Leadership Conference of the Business Professionals of America in Marlborough, Massachusetts on March 5-7, 2016.

A motion to approve the Hudson High School overnight field trip to the State Leadership Conference of the Business Professionals of America in Marlborough, Massachusetts on March 5-7, 2016 was made by Ms. Tousignant Dufour and seconded by Ms. Hay. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

3. Approval of Overnight Travel for the Hudson High School Baseball Team to Attend the Spring Baseball Scrimmages in Plymouth, Falmouth and Marion, Massachusetts on April 1-3, 2016

Dr. Fortuna recommended approval of the Hudson High School overnight travel for the Hudson High School Baseball Team to attend the spring baseball scrimmages in Plymouth, Falmouth and Marion, Massachusetts on April 1-3, 2016.

A motion to approve the Hudson High School overnight travel for the Hudson High School Baseball Team to attend the spring baseball scrimmages in Plymouth, Falmouth and Marion, Massachusetts on April 1-3, 2016 was made by Ms. Tousignant Dufour and seconded by Mr. Maston. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

4. Approval of School Choice – Grades 5-12 for the 2016-2017 School Year

Dr. Fortuna recommended approval of school choice for the 2016-2017 school year with eight seats per grade in grades 5-7 at the Quinn Middle School and unlimited seats at Hudson High School.

Discussion ensued.

A motion to approve school choice for the 2016-2017 school year with ten seats per grade in grades 5-7 at the Quinn Middle School was made by Ms. Hay and seconded by Ms. Hallsworth. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

A motion to approve school choice for the 2016-2017 school year with unlimited seats in grades 8-12 at Hudson High School was made by Ms. Hay and seconded by Ms. Hallsworth. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

5. Approval of the School Committee Meeting Schedule for 2016-2017

Dr. Fortuna recommended approval of the School Committee Meeting Calendar for 2016-2017.

Discussion ensued.

Committee members requested that a July 26th meeting be added to the agenda. Dr. Fortuna informed the Committee the calendar would be revised to reflect the additional July 26th meeting and that the vote will be tabled to the next scheduled meeting on February 23, 2016.

6. Superintendent's Evaluation

Committee member, Allyson Hay's Powerpoint presentation for the Superintendent's Evaluation highlighted the following:

Superintendent's performance goals and progress towards those goals:

- Superintendent Performance Rating Standard 1: Instructional Leadership – Rating of Proficient
- Superintendent Performance Rating Standard II: Management and Operations - Rating of Proficient
- Superintendent Performance Rating Standard III: Family and Community Engagement - Rating of Proficient; and
- Superintendent Performance Rating Standard IV - Professional Culture - Rating of Proficient

Dr. Fortuna received an overall Summative Performance of Proficient.

Discussion ensued.

Approved

A motion to approve the Superintendent's Evaluation, as presented, was made by Ms. O'Brien and seconded by Mr. Maston. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

Committee Chair, Jennifer O'Brien, signed the Superintendent's Evaluation.

Reclassifications:

A motion to approve the reclassifications of funds, as presented, was made by Ms. Tousignant Dufour and seconded by Ms. Hallsworth. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

VI. Items of Interest to the School Committee:

Committee Chair, Jennifer O'Brien reported that she had a good meeting with Mr. Lucy regarding the budget.

VII. Executive Session/Adjournment

At 8:08 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 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.

Vote by roll call:

Ms. O'Brien – yes
Ms. Tousignant Dufour – 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