

Approved

**Hudson School Committee
Open Session Minutes**

Meeting Date: January 19, 2016

Location: Administration Building
155 Apsley Street

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

Members absent: None

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:

Regular Meeting – December 15, 2015: A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Luoto and seconded by Mr. Maston. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

Regular Meeting – January 5, 2016: A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Luoto and seconded by Mr. Maston. On a vote of 6-0-1, with Mr. Davis abstaining, the motion passed.

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 the Holiday Coalition, Penny Wars which was won by the Sophomore Class and raised \$116.36, and the Powder Puff flag football game with the Junior and Senior Girls. There will be a vote taken on whether to make the flag football game a co-ed event.

Ms. Sagastume also shared the burger bar at the High School is great and a big hit!

Superintendent's Report – Dr. Jodi Fortuna

District Leadership Team Meeting

The District Leadership Team met in December and January and continue to review the goals and learning plans moving forward. The Team will have the following outcomes by June:

- Develop three common assessments this year;
- The District will use a common checklist to work with our teachers to guide the creation and revision of high quality assessments. The checklist was adopted at the District Leadership Team Meeting on January 6th;
- Develop a brief paper/guide about what type of assessment is best suited for what purpose;
- Build the capacity regarding learning targets and success criteria in preparation for next year;
- Define and articulate a baseline of where the District is in using data in order to inform practice. This will include identifying potential obstacles as we move towards becoming a data driven culture; and
- Complete curriculum work.

The District Leadership Team has also developed two preliminary future strategic objectives moving forward:

Future goals for District Leadership Team:

- Create a balanced and rigorous assessment system of Summative, Interim Formative and Assessment for Learning; and
- Develop teacher's understand of Learning Targets and Success Criteria

A new team, the Executive Leadership Team, will advise the Superintendent on setting the strategic direction for the District leaders and teachers so that optimum conditions can be established to result in learning for every student and adult in the system.

Executive Leadership Team Meeting

This newly formed Executive Leadership Team met and established the following goals:

- To norm the expectations for teachers' collection of evidence and narrative and administrative feedback at the formative stage of Educator Evaluation; and
- To norm the walkthrough process and narratives by examining exemplars.

Elementary Principal Team Meeting

On Tuesday, January 12th, Dr. Fortuna and the elementary Principals met and discussed the elementary report card and concerns about the usefulness of the report card.

Dr. Fortuna advised parents that an explanatory sheet was being sent home regarding the report card and additional information regarding grade level focus of curriculum for the second trimester.

Finance and Operations

Farley Telephones

The Farley telephone system has reached its end of life stage. Ms. Lange, Ms. Schuck and Mr. Belli continue to actively work on a plan to replace the Farley telephone system. In order to avoid being reactive when things happen, the team will also be working on a plan to update the phone system in each building based on their age and life expectancy.

Dr. Fortuna also mentioned the impact on the Farley community has been mitigated as much as possible as the District actively works to determine the best replacement plan, and advised parents that they may notice they are unable to leave voicemail for individual teachers as we go through this transition.

Late Busses

It was incumbent upon the District to make some quick changes to the Quinn Middle School “West” Late Bus Run. Upon returning from December Break, the District was notified by the bus company that one of two late busses was running over capacity and that it was a safety issue that needed to be addressed by the District immediately.

The District investigated by reviewing the late bus routes on paper and exploring the causation for the large increase in the number of students on the bus. The investigation resulted in the following conclusions:

- There were approximately 22 students exiting the bus at the library stop;
- The library stop (1.0 mi) was within the 1.5 mile walk zone established by School Committee Policy;
- The majority of the students exiting at the library then proceeded to walk to the Boys and Girls Club;
- The Boys and Girls Club (1.0 mi) is also within the walk zone established by the School Committee; and
- The number of students riding the late bus and exiting at this stop increased when the cold weather started.

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The District considered the idea of adding a third late bus to Quinn, however, that would result in approximately a \$9,000 increase to the District budget which is already stretched. The decision was made to consistently adhere to School Committee Policy and eliminate a stop that was within the walk zone. Dr. Fortuna reiterated that this was a decision that was directly related to student safety and needed to be made quickly. The change in the bus route was highlighted on the transportation website Friday, January 8th. The students exiting the bus were verbally told of the change by the bus driver daily from January 11-13th that the stop would not exist on January 14th. Mr. Webster communicated to the entire school community on January 13th. The District regrets the lateness of the notification on the 13th.

An after action review indicated that this communication should have gone to families on the 8th. The rapidness of the decision was due to the student safety issues of having a bus over capacity.

The after action review resulted in the District reviewing the High School late bus route as well. This resulted in a realization that the High School late bus run also had a stop at the library (1.2 mi) which was within the walk-zone established by School Committee Policy. In order to be consistent with our adherence to policy, this stop will be eliminated on January 29th. The District has additional time to notify families because there is not a safety issue with overcrowding on the High School late bus. The students that ride the late bus will be verbally told of the change by the Hudson Public School employee who monitors students riding the bus and a notice will be placed in the Round Robin. Given that there are far fewer students riding the Hudson High School late bus, a general phone call will not be made to the school community.

Discussion ensued.

Curriculum Review Task Force

The Curriculum Task Force met on Thursday, January 14th. The first teacher joined the group and the input was exceptionally valuable. The focus of the meeting was to develop a rubric to define the standard for rubrics being developed as part of the District's curriculum and instruction work.

Superintendent's School Visits:

Farley Elementary School – January 11th
Mulready Elementary School – January 14th

Superintendent's Items of Interest

Sapphire Team Memoir

Dr. Fortuna attended the 5th grade students' presentation of the final draft of the memoir project that they have been working on. While Dr. Fortuna has been visiting Quinn Middle School, she has observed their work in progress and found their final projects exceptional.

Approved

Dr. Fortuna noted that the visit served as a beacon of why the work being done in the District is so important and why Hudson is such a wonderful community in which to live, learn and work.

Meeting with New River Edge Arts Alliance Director

On Thursday, January 7th, Dr. Fortuna met with the new Director of River Edge Arts Alliance, Kat Alix-Gaudreau. Dr. Fortuna looks forward to a stronger, renewed relationship with the River's Edge Arts Alliance which continues to enrich the already robust arts program that the Hudson Public Schools offer to the District.

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 continue their work on several draft policies.

IV. Matters for Discussion:

1. Hudson High School GPA and Class Rank – Dr. Brian Reagan and Angela Flynn

Hudson High School Principal, Dr. Brian Reagan, and Director of Guidance, Angie Flynn, highlighted for the Committee the trend among high schools across the country to move away from traditional class rank policies.

After extensive research and discussions Ms. Flynn has had regarding this topic with other guidance directors, conversations with multiple college admissions counselors and published research, Dr. Reagan and Ms. Flynn recommended the elimination of class rank.

Discussion ensued.

Dr. Fortuna noted that this item will be tabled to the next scheduled School Committee meeting on Tuesday, February 9th for a vote.

Committee members thanked Dr. Reagan and Ms. Flynn for such an informative presentation.

VI. **Matters for Action:**

1. Approval of May 2016 Town Warrant

Dr. Fortuna recommended approval of the May 2016 Town Warrant which includes a vote to establish and authorize the use of a revolving fund for Professional Development Activities within the Hudson Public Schools. The sum of said funds to be expended shall not exceed Twenty-Thousand Dollars; or take any action relative thereto.

A motion to approve the May 2016 Town Warrant was made by Ms. Hay and seconded by Mr. Luoto. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

2. Approval of Contract with Walker Partnerships in the Amount of \$14,932.00 for District-Wide Special Education Program Evaluation

Dr. Fortuna recommended approval of the Contract with Walker Partnerships in the amount of \$14,932.00 for District-wide Special Education Program evaluation.

Discussion ensued.

A motion to approve the Contract with Walker Partnerships in the amount of \$14,932.00 for District-wide Special Education Program evaluation was made by Ms. Tousignant Dufour and seconded by Ms. Hay. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

Reclassifications:

A motion to approve the reclassifications of funds, as presented, was made by Mr. Luoto and seconded by Ms. Tousignant Dufour. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

VII. **Items of Interest to the School Committee:**

Mr. Luoto would like to pursue the discussion regarding the purchase of a van for the District.

Discussion ensued.

Ms. Tousignant Dufour asked that Dr. Fortuna address the District plans regarding the unfounded bomb threats to area schools.

Dr. Fortuna assured the community that Hudson Public Schools has a safety plan in place. The District continues to work closely with Hudson Police Department on evaluation procedures and subsequent actions.

Approved

VIII. Executive Session/Adjournment

At 8:14 p.m., Committee Chair, Jennifer O'Brien, noted that there was need for an Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to preparation for bargaining with non-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.

Vote by roll call:

Ms. O'Brien – yes
Ms. Tousignant Dufour – yes
Mr. Davis - 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