

Approved

**Hudson School Committee
Open Session Minutes**

Meeting Date: April 23, 2019

Location: 155 Aspley Street

Members present: Glenn Maston, Steven Smith, Elizabeth Hallsworth, Adam Tracy, Nina Ryan, Matthew McDowell, and Michele Tousignant Dufour

Members absent: Emily Figueiredo, Student Representative

Others present: Dr. Marco C. Rodrigues, Superintendent
Annamarie O'Donnell, Recording Secretary

I. Call the Meeting to Order: 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair, Glenn Maston.

II. Approval of Minutes:

Regular Meeting: April 9, 2019

A motion to approve the minutes of April 9, 2019 was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Ms. Tousignant Dufour. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

III. Public Participation:

Ms. Shanna Weston, parent of Quinn student, asked about the Quinn Middle School schedule and why it has not been released to parents. She also brought up concerns of the impact of the whole grain waiver and healthiness of the snacks that Chartwells is providing.

Dr. Rodrigues responded that the timeline for the Quinn Middle School schedule has not changed and there would be a presentation to School Committee on May 7. There will be two sessions for parents, one for parents of incoming grade 5 students, and one for parents of incoming grade 6 and 7 students. The schedule will then be brought to the School Committee for final approval at the end of May.

Reports and Presentations

IV. Report of the Superintendent: LOOK Act and Dual Language Program

1. Dr. Rodrigues stated that his report will outline the steps being taken to implement a Dual Language program. He introduced Ms. Erin Goldstein, Director of English Learner Education and Ms. Ana Pimentel, Director of World Languages. They presented on the progress of the planning for a

Dual Language program, with hopes to implement the program in 2020.

They gave an overview of the passage of the LOOK Act in 2017. In 2002, question 2 required ELLs to be taught in sheltered English immersion programs. The new Look Act provides for flexibility for program models and DESE is now encouraging Districts to consider implementing Dual Language programs. The LOOK Act has also established the Seal of Biliteracy. This is a special insignia earned by students who achieve high levels of bilingualism and biliteracy. This seal is a Massachusetts credential placed on the student's diploma.

The goals of Dual Language programs are full bilingualism and biliteracy. All subjects are taught in both languages (English and the partner language). The programs last at least five years but ideally K-12. Well implemented dual language programs result in high academic achievement, full biliteracy and bilingualism, and cultural competence.

Dual language programs are classified in different ways. There are one way programs in which all students are learning the same language. There are also two way programs where there is a mix of ELLs, whose language is the partner language, and English speakers. In this case, the ELLs will learn English and the English speakers will learn the partner language.

Dual Language programs are also classified by language allocation. There are 80-20 programs where 80% of the instructional time is spent in the partner language. This is usually grades K, 1, and 2. By grade 2 or 3, the balance of time starts to shift to a 50-50 program where 50% of the instructional time is taught in each language.

Academic achievement and English development outcomes are similar in both models. The students in 80/20 programs develop higher levels of proficiency in partner language. Some research shows that students in 80/20 programs are more likely to read for pleasure in the partner language. Some well established Massachusetts Dual language programs have transitioned successfully from the 50/50 model to an 80/20 program.

In the United States, there is currently significant growth in Dual Language Programs. Almost every state has some dual language programs and many are actively expanding. There are a variety of languages in these programs across the country. Ms. Pimentel gave the committee a brief list of growing programs in Massachusetts and across the United States. She also spoke about several researched base benefits to bilingualism and dual language programs including:

- Cognitive Benefits for fully proficient bilinguals
- Cognitive benefits for ELLs
 - Dual Language programs allow an additive model of bilingualism

- Academic Achievement
- Attendance, engagement, interest in school
- College and career readiness
- Development of student's identity
- Cultural Pluralism

Ms. Pimentel and Ms. Goldstein cited studies showing the need for bilingual employees as economies are globalized.

Ms. Goldstein presented a chart of the languages of current kindergarten students in Hudson. Twenty nine percent of our current kindergarteners speak a language other than English at home. There are nine different languages in addition to English. We have enough speakers of Spanish and Portuguese to create dual language programs for those languages in Hudson.

Ms. Goldstein presented a sample chart of what a K-12 dual language program might look like. Additionally, she outlined the following next steps:

- Convene a dual language committee
- Apply to the DESE for new EL program approval
- Plan for program implementation

Discussion ensued.

Ms. Hallsworth asked about the availability of teachers and if any research exists on dual language programs with students with language based disabilities. Additionally, she asked about the parent component and the impact on parents being able to help with homework.

Mr. Maston asked if the program would start in kindergarten and if the program would be for five years or extended.

Ms. Ryan talked about the sign up aspect of the program as well as the possibility of offering programs in additional languages spoken in our community.

Mr. McDowell asked about the logistics of implementation. He pointed out that there could be budget implications with transportation if the dual language classes were all located at one school.

Discussion ensued about the timing and composition of the dual language committee.

Mr. Smith asked about the big watch outs with implementation of dual language programs. Discussion ensued about the planning and support needed both logistically and in preparing teachers and curriculum.

Ms. Goldstein spoke about MABE (Multi-state Association for Bilingual Education). MABE offers consulting services to support districts in implementing programs. The district has been in contact with MABE and other districts to find out about the offerings. Among other things, MABE facilitates a two-day retreat to help plan these programs. They also have resources for professional development for established programs.

Mr. Tracy stated a concern with the total cost of ownership. He made note of the need to look at both the direct cost and indirect costs as part of the well thought out implementation.

Mr. McDowell asked if fifteen months was enough time to have a well thought out implementation. Discussion ensued about the deadlines to apply to the state for approval. Dr. Rodrigues stated that Ms. Goldstein and Ms. Pimentel have presented to him a well thought out detailed step by step timeline. Ms. Goldstein said that MABE recommends about a year and a half. Hudson is on track with this recommendation based on the work that has already been done.

Mr. Tracy asked if it was realistic to start with two languages. Discussion ensued.

The committee stated excitement for this program and offered their support for things that might be needed.

Dr. Rodrigues spoke about the Town of Hudson water issue and the impact to the schools. An action plan was developed over the past weekend. Some fountains were wrapped which sent the wrong message that the water was not safe. The fountains were unwrapped Monday because the town and the EPA have both said that the water meets all regulated standards. Bottled water has been delivered as an alternative and will continue until the filtration project is complete. The estimate for this is 45 days.

Subcommittee Reports

Budget Subcommittee

None

Policy Subcommittee

The Policy Subcommittee will be meeting before next school committee meeting.

Strategic Goals Subcommittee

Mr. Maston stated that they are working to schedule for early May.

Superintendent's Evaluation Subcommittee

Mr. Maston stated that they are working to schedule for early May.

Other:

Student Report

Emily Figueiredo, student representative reported that it has been very busy. Community Council is hosting a badminton tournament as a fundraiser for future projects.

V. **Matters for Discussion:**

- a) Old Business
- b) New Business

1. **Chartwells Update**

Chris Callahan and Shane Riordan of Chartwells gave the following update: Mr. Callahan clarified that the whole grain waiver is only for pizza dough and pasta. Additionally, whole grain pasta is also being used. The bread being used is still whole grain.

Mr. Riordan presented the following results:

Financials

- March sales, reimbursements, and profit is up YTD vs. last year.
- Reimbursable lunch participation up 9% YTD
- Meal counts up 30,000 YTD
- Revenues up 89,000 YTD
- Program subsidy down 69% YTD vs. last year

Recent Initiatives

- 100% juice slushes have been introduced in the elementary schools as a breakfast and lunch participation driver. Breakfast participation has increased.
- The Grant application for Fuel up to Play 60 for \$10,000 has been submitted. This grant will be split between the Nutrition and Physical Activity Departments.
- Successful completion of Procurement Audit
- State Administrative Review prep for May review
- Chartwells is working with administration to inventory and access the state of food service Equipment district wide.
- Fully implemented Smart Snack products at all schools. Smart snacks are reformulated for schools to meet the USDA guidelines. Mr. Riordan introduced the requirements for a snack to be considered a smart snack. All snacks that are being sold meet all the requirements.
- Visits have been made at all schools to make sure monitoring of snack purchases is in place. There is a mechanism in place to allow parents to control if they want to opt out of their student buying snacks.

Discussion ensued about smart snacks. Twenty to twenty-five percent of the students are getting a snack after the full meal. Mr. Riordan spoke about the financial impact of the a la carte snacks at the elementary schools.

Ms. Ryan stated that parents have reached out to have certain snacks removed. Mr. Callahan suggested that the next wellness meeting have some

people involved to go through the list and come up with a plan for next year.

Ms. Hallsworth asked if there is a complete list of available snacks. Mr. Callahan said there is a link on the website to the USDA link to smart snacks. Discussion ensued about the breakfast cereals as well.

Mr. Tracy asked if there has been a statistical change in purchases since the whole grain waiver was implemented. He has asked for this data to make sure it is worth it.

Discussion ensued about the nutrition labels and amount of sugar and if this information could be found on the nutri kids site.

Discussion ensued about the mechanisms in place to make sure parents have control and their students cannot buy certain products. Clarification on the process to do this was explained. The committee requested clear instructions on the process to be sent out to each school.

2. Meal Rate Increase Discussion

Ms. Patty Lange Executive Director of Finance and Operations gave the following overview of unpaid balances:

As of April 12, there is an unpaid lunch balance \$9759.58. About \$6000 of this has been generated this year. Weekly emails are sent to parents alerting them they have an unpaid balance. Parents are also able to set up low balance alerts themselves. Additionally, the principals get a list every week.

Discussion ensued about whether the outreach has resulted in Free and Reduced Lunch Applications.

Ms. Lange reported that the Federal School Lunch program requires lunch prices to be set in accordance with their guidelines. She explained that we did not raise prices this year when we secured a new food service vendor. If our program is not profitable, we are required to use the price equity tool provided by the U.S.D.A and will have to raise prices in FY20.

Discussion ensued about the consequences of not complying. Ms. Lange said the district could be fined or lose reimbursements.

Ms. Lange presented several options for a pricing structure over the next two years and how the options fit with the price equity tool. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Tracy requested to have the number of cash meals before the next meeting.

Dr. Rodrigues stated that this will be brought forward for a vote at the next

meeting.

Discussion ensued about the goal to break even in the food service program and the difference in the accounting views vs. cash flow views.

3. FY19 Budget Forecast

Ms. Lange gave a review of FY19 budget and impact on the district's long-term financial plan. She reported that things are more favorable since the February projection in all categories (general expense, personnel, and transportation).

General Expense savings are based somewhat on our hiring freeze, legal and professional, technology, contracted services, utilities, copying, and Professional Development.

Personnel savings were achieved by hiring less than our budget, leaves of absence, and unfilled vacancies throughout the year.

Maintenance of effort is an annual fiscal requirement for a district who receives the IDEA grant. This maintenance of effort requires a calculation to prove that for special education, we spend at the same level of local and state funding compared to last year. This will result in using some of our circuit breaker funding this year but this will be offset by using less school choice funds.

Ms. Lange stated that we are on target to meet our financial plan and may have some additional funds. We will develop a plan with the budget team and bring the recommendation to the school committee. It is possible we could pre pay some items this year in preparation for next year.

Ms. Lange updated the committee on the Transportation Bid. She reported that bids came in from Durham Express, First Student, and NRT. First Student came in with the lowest bid. Currently, Ms. Lange is checking references and reading the bid. There will be a recommendation at the next school committee meeting for a contract. With this bid it appears that it is about \$80,000 less than the budget in year one.

Dr. Rodrigues added now that we know the budget for transportation we can start the hiring associated with the new budget.

4. Quinn Middle School Principal Search Update

Dr. Rodrigues gave the following update on the Quinn Middle School Principal Search:

- Focus Groups were conducted
- A survey was sent out
- There were 34 applicants of which 8 were identified to be interviewed

Approved

- The candidates will be interviewed on May 1
- There will be a Meet and Greet of the top 3 candidates for staff and community on May 8
- The superintendent's cabinet will interview the top 3 candidates on May 13

VI. **Matters for Action:**

Old Business

1. **Second Reading and Approval of Proposed School Committee Policies: Section J: School Choice**

Dr. Rodrigues and Mr. Smith stated that there had been no feedback regarding these policies. A motion to approve the Proposed School Committee Policies: Section J School Choice was made by Ms. Tousignant Dufour and seconded by Mr. Smith. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

New Business

1. **Approval of Portugal UNESCO Conference for Young Scientists : Anticipated Dates: 1/8/20-1/11/20**

A motion to approve the Portugal UNESCO Conference for Young Scientists: Anticipated Dates 1/8/20-1/11/20 was made by Ms. Tousignant Dufour and seconded by Ms. Hallsworth. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

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

Mr. Smith would like to create a resolution for the MASC conference to see how we can make the transportation piece more competitive. Ms. Lange commented that the collaborative she works with is putting together a consortium with this as one of its goal. Mr. Smith stated he would be gathering information to bring to the school committee soon.

Mr. Maston stated he has been contacted by Lynn Ryan who has put together a nomination for George Luoto for lifetime membership to MASC. Mr. Maston will bring this to the next meeting.

Ms. Ryan stated that she had a very nice lunch earlier that day with the secretaries and administrative assistants. The lunch was put on by the administration team. She stated how nice it was to see everyone in a very different setting.

VIII. **Executive Session**

Not Needed

IX. **Adjournment**

Approved

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Tracy and seconded by Ms. Hallsworth. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed. At 9:15 p.m. Committee Chair, Glenn Maston, adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Hallsworth, Secretary
Hudson School Committee