

**Hudson School Committee
Open Session Minutes**

Meeting Date: January 21, 2020

Location: 155 Aspley Street

Members present: Glenn Maston, Steven Smith, Adam Tracy (7:08 pm), Nina Ryan, and
Tousignant Dufour

Members absent: Matthew McDowell, Rebecca Weksner

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

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: January 7, 2020

A motion to approve the minutes of January 7, 2020 was made by Ms. Tousignant Dufour and seconded by Ms. Ryan. On a vote of 4-0, the motion passed.

Public Participation:

None

Reports and Presentations

Report of the Superintendent: Social Studies Civics Curriculum

Dr. Rodrigues introduced Ms. Kathy Provost, Assistant Superintendent, and Mr. Todd Wallingford, Curriculum Director for Humanities, to present some updates to the Social Studies curriculum as a result of new frameworks that have been introduced.

Ms. Provost expressed their excitement about the new history and social science framework that was adopted in June of 2018. The framework increases the emphasis on civics at all grade levels and has a natural connection with literacy standards. As part of this, there is a new eighth grade civics course and an inclusion of cultures in the new standards. These new standards practice questions to guide inquiry and a connection to literacy.

Mr. Wallingford stated that the updated curriculum framework emphasizes and prioritizes things we have already been doing in the social studies program in Hudson. There has not been the need to make many changes in the scope and sequence. As a response to a lack of emphasis on social studies education and an uptick in awareness of how little people know about citizenship, Governor Baker signed a new law back in 2018. The mandate came from the legislature and the standards came from DESE. The mandate requires every 8th grade student in the state to take part in a student led civic action project. This engages them in an inquiry process where they identify and research an issue, and develop and carry out

action plans Also, the students are required to have some opportunity between 9th and 12th grade to take part in a civic action project.

Mr. Wallingford went on to highlight how these new standards influence how we think about social studies in the district:

- No changes have been made to the grades 9-12 core US and World curriculum
- We have had to add a grade 8 civics course
- There will be a new MCAS test for grade 8. There will be a pilot and field test in 2022 tied directly to the civics course.
- Grades 10-12 there is a broad set of electives
- Grades 5-7 have US History, Ancient Civilizations, World History, and Geography

He went on to discuss the elementary level and OCON (one community one nation). He said that we looked at the new standards as an opportunity to breed citizenship at the elementary level. Mr. Wallingford said that about a year ago he became aware of work in Andover to develop units at every grade level K-5. The units put seven civic dispositions at the front and center. OCON combines literacy, inquiry, and arts to teach civic disposition.

He went on to talk to about how is it rolling out in Hudson. Last winter, two Forest Ave teachers went to Andover with Mr. Wallingford. They then drafted a design of a unit. Additionally, Mr. Wallingford taught a Summer Institute course for 17 K- 4 teachers. During the institute, each teacher designed a unit for their grade level and they are piloting them this year. Next year, the units will be formalized across the district. Each year units will be added.

Mr. Wallingford is tapping into a larger network of schools interested in collaborating on curriculum together. This March we will be hosting an OCON Conference at HHS for multiple school districts for grades 4 and 5 teachers.

Mr. Tracy asked if there are any fees for the consortium. Mr. Wallingford stated that there are fees to run the institutes.

Mr. Maston asked if the state is expecting us to track the civic action project. Discussion ensued. Mr. Wallingford confirmed that the current grade 8 students are the students that will need the project to graduate. He went on to say the plan is to embed projects in electives. Mr. Maston asked if there has been any thought of moving the DC field trip back to grade 8. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Ryan stated she was glad to see that this aligns with things already going on at the elementary level. Mr. Smith expressed his interest in hearing on how this progresses over time.

Subcommittee Reports

Budget Subcommittee

none

Policy Subcommittee

Mr. Smith reported that the scheduled meeting for earlier tonight had been canceled, and has been rescheduled for February 4.

Strategic Goals Subcommittee

Dr. Rodrigues stated that there is a meeting tentatively scheduled for January 28, 2020

Superintendent's Evaluation Subcommittee

none

Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee

none

Student Report

Caitlin Reagan, Student Representative, gave the student report with the following highlights:

- Colorcycle Update: The community council colorcycle rep has reached out to teachers at the middle school. There has been a positive reaction to the initiative. They are hoping to find a time to meet with the student government at Quinn to get this initiative kicked off there.
- Community Council is looking to expand their reach at Hudson High School by creating ways they can be more accessible to students to hear their concerns.
- Curriculum night will be held this Thursday.
- Cabaret Night is Friday January 31 in the mini theater.
- Students have a concern about notifications of snow days and delays. Currently, the all call goes to parents. Community Council is working with administration to see if there is a way for students at the high school to get the call as well.
- Air conditioning in F and G pods is a concern among faculty and students. Caitlin asked for an update on the timeline for installation.

Mr. Maston stated that there are things that need to be done in preparation for the installation. Dr. Rodrigues stated that a series of events was triggered once the money was approved and we are on schedule to start this summer. The first school to be done would be Mulready, followed by Hudson High School.

Matters for Discussion:

- a) Old Business
- b) New Business

1. Report on Listening Sessions/ Parent Forum

Dr. Rodrigues reported that he and Ms. Kathy Provost have completed the second round of listening sessions for the staff at each school as well as the second parent forum.

He presented the following summary:

- At Forest and Farley, the conversation was dominated by the Dual Language program.
- At Mulready, there was discussion about the recent flu and some Special Education case loads.
- At Quinn, there was discussion about the positives of the Grade 5 schedule. Teachers expressed they are having some challenges with the social emotional learning blocks in grades 6 and 7. This is due to the split in time for social emotional learning activities and recess. There was discussion on the potential for a change with perhaps a pilot run through the end of this year.
- At Hudson High, conversation centered around the

substitute teacher shortage and the process used to develop the electives in the program of studies.

- At the Parent Forum, most of the conversation was around the Dual Language Program.

Mr. Smith asked about the specific concerns raised with respect to the Special Education Resources at Quinn and Mulready. Dr. Rodrigues said that at Mulready it revolved around teachers caseloads and would be addressed during the budget process. He went on to say that at Quinn, the conversation revolved around the number of Special Education teachers per grade level. This will be looked at during the budget process.

Mr. Smith commented on the mention of low morale by the staff at Hudson High and asked if we knew if there were drivers. Dr. Rodrigues stated that he thinks this is in response to looking at potential changes, for example in course offerings. He went on to say that this contributes to a perception of devaluing. Discussion ensued about communication to get people involved in the process. Mr. Smith asked what the attendance is at the sessions. Dr. Rodrigues responded that it ranges from 5-20 depending on the school and or day.

Ms. Ryan asked Dr. Rodrigues to speak to why school at Mulready was not closed recently due to the flu. Dr. Rodrigues stated that he had heard from five or six parents. He stated he monitored the situation as it progressed. He said the outbreak was not localized and the flu has an incubation period of up to five days. Additionally, we cannot control when individuals returning. The school was sanitized every day. Ms. Kelly Sardella, Mulready Elementary School Principal, did not see an uptick of students getting sick in school. We maintained the open school for the remaining 150 students. He spoke with DPH, medical professionals, and colleagues and the decision was made to keep the school open.

2. FY20 Q1 Student Activity Report

Ms. Patricia Lange Executive Director of Finance and Operations presented the FY20 Student Activities quarter 1 report. She stated presenting quarterly is part of our procedures. This reconciliation report is sent to the town and the principals.

Mr. Maston asked if the athletics line item was collections for individual sports athletic fees. Ms. Lange clarified that the income from sports is included in the athletics revolving account. This account would capture things such as fundraising.

Ms. Ryan asked about the accuracy of the dates (2010-2019) shown on the Profit and Loss. Ms. Lange stated that there may be clubs that were collecting funds back in 2010 and that this is really a

balance sheet and the titles are just a function of the software we are using.

Matters for Action:

- a) Old Business
- b) New Business

1. **Approval of Hudson High School Program of Studies**

Mr. Jason Medeiros, Hudson High School Principal, and Ms. Angie Flynn, Hudson High School Director of Guidance presented the key changes to the program of studies for next year.

Mr. Medeiros stated that there were three variables that drove the process of developing the program of studies for 2020-2021. Many of the changes are to address current learning needs of the Hudson High community. In some cases, this is new programming to support different populations of students or opportunities for students to explore core content in a different way. The other drivers were to support innovation and to be prudent with the allocation of resources.

Mr. Medeiros went on to speak to the new courses. He said that one of the most substantial changes was shifting from offering an English 11 academic and honors track to incorporating English 11 and English 12. This will allow for a more heterogeneous learning environment by age and give students choice with the type of content. He spoke of the new offerings in the Math department including a Financial reasoning class for grade 12. This core math class focusses on math application. Additionally, Invigorate Math 8 is a course, which will support students entering the high school not at grade level. The science department will introduce Medical Interventions to complete the bio- medical pathway and an honors level Stewardship and Environmental Sciences class, which can be considered a replacement for the AP Environmental Science that was put on hold. The other additions will continue sequences that are already in motion as well as program listings for the Harbor program.

Mr. Smith asked if we had a way up front to understand how many students might be interested in a particular class. Mr. Medeiros stated that a lot of these are not electives. There has been discussion about how to roll out a choice model for core content. Ms. Tousignant Dufour asked if we ever did surveys in guidance to gather information to guide what we do. Ms. Flynn said we do not but it is something we could consider doing. She went on to say that up until now, we have done a lot of looking at historical enrollment. Discussion ensued. Mr. Medeiros stated that there should be a predictable way to develop the course listing guided by

the signpost of the vision of the graduate.

Ms. Flynn went through the courses that had technical name changes to spark a little more interest or more accurately reflect what students are studying.

Mr. Medeiros noted another core change to the program of studies is to look at how we better articulate strengths of the programs and how we package choices students have. Currently students have access to four post-secondary pathways. The new program of studies outlines these pathways in a more transparent way. Mr. Smith asked how these pathways are communicated to students. Ms. Flynn responded that these pathways were never packaged this nicely. She went on to say the counselors would be going into all classrooms including grade 7 at Quinn to highlight this.

Ms. Flynn went through the courses that are being withheld for 2020-2021. Some of these are being substituted by new offerings while others are traditionally on a rotation. She also went through some courses that are new to rotation and pending further evaluation.

Ms. Tousignant Dufour asked if we are looking at how we do scheduling to make sure every student has the supports they need. Mr. Medeiros responded that if request numbers are low and there is only one section, there is a potential for more student conflicts. The goal is to build the master schedule on the front end to minimize conflicts.

Ms. Flynn went through the timeline of the course selection process.

A motion to approve the Hudson High School Program of Studies was made by Mr. Tracy and seconded by Ms. Tousignant Dufour. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

2. **Approval of Calendar Change- March 2020 Professional Development Day**

Dr. Rodrigues stated that late last month we were officially notified by the town there will be a presidential primary election on March 3. We have a full day professional development day scheduled for March 9. This request is to move that professional development day to March 3 and have school on March 9.

A motion to approve the calendar change for the March 2020 professional development day was made by Ms. Tousignant Dufour and seconded by Ms. Ryan. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

Mr. Smith made a request for us to publicize this in Creating

Connections. Discussion ensued about getting the word out.

3. **Second Reading and Approval of Proposed Revisions and Additions to J Section Policies**

Mr. Maston asked the committee if any feedback has been received. Committee members stated there had been none.

A motion to approve the proposed revisions and additions to J section policies was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Ms. Tousignant Dufour. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

4. **Approval of Patricia Lange Contract Extension**

Dr. Rodrigues stated that Ms. Lange has announced her retirement at the end of this school year. This request is to extend her contract from July 1 to July 17.

A motion to approve the extension of Patricia Lange's contract from July 1- July 17 was made by Mr. Tracy and seconded by Ms. Ryan. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

5. **Approval of closure of inactive Student Activity Accounts**

Dr. Rodrigues stated that the School Store and Strive accounts have been dormant for some time. Ms. Lange stated that the remaining funds would go to the general fund for student activities.

A motion to approve the closure of inactive Student Activity Accounts was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Tracy. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

Consent Agenda

6. **Approval of FY20-104 Financial Literacy & Implementation Grant in the amount of \$6124.00**

7. **Approval of FY20 Project Bread Hudson High School Grant in the amount of \$2500.00**

A motion to approve these two grants by consent agenda was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Ms. Ryan . On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

Items of Interest to the School Committee

Mr. Smith extended his thanks to the custodial staff for all they have done and continue to do to keep the students safe.

Executive Session

Not needed

Adjournment 8:29

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Ms. Tousignant Dufour. On a vote of 5-0, the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Tousignant Dufour, Secretary
Hudson School Committee