

Approved

**Hudson School Committee
Open Session Minutes**

Meeting Date: December 3, 2019

Location: 155 Aspley Street

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

Members absent: none

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

I. Call the Meeting to Order: 7:01 p.m.

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

II. Approval of Minutes:

Regular Meeting: November 12, 2019

A motion to approve the minutes of November 12, 2019 was made by Ms. Tousignant Dufour and seconded by Ms. Ryan. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

III. Public Participation:

none

IV. Reports and Presentations

Report of the Superintendent: Climate Survey

Dr. Rodrigues stated that the report of the superintendent would showcase the results of the climate survey performed last spring. As part of the action plan of the District Improvement Plan under objective #4, a survey to gauge parent, student, and staff perception about the climate and culture in our schools was administered. The goal of the District Improvement Plan for objective #4 is to have more positive responses for climate and culture at the end of the three year plan. The survey used is sponsored by US Department of Education and is designed to get perception of the three domains of engagement, safety, and environment. Under each of these domains there are sub domains.

The four respondent groups surveyed between the end of May and June 2019 were students in grades 5-11, parents/guardians in all grade levels, teachers/instructional staff in all grade levels, and non-instructional staff for high school staff only, due to a glitch during the administration of the survey. There was good participation for students and parents/guardians. There was less participation for teachers and non-instructional staff.

Ms. Kathy Provost, Assistant Superintendent, spoke on the scores that are part of the results. She explained that benchmark scale scores were created by taking items that were similar and putting them together. There are performance levels of 3,2,1 corresponding to Most Favorable, Favorable, and Least Favorable based on the aggregate scale score for each of

the domains. Ms. Provost reported that the benchmark scale score was not available for the parent/guardian respondent group, but for the other groups the overall scale score fell consistently in the level 2 favorable category.

Dr. Weksner asked why there is not a parent scale score. Dr. Rodrigues reported that the score is not provided due to the collating environment of the data. Ms. Provost went on to say that the district leadership team feels that all the items on the survey are important and item level data was analyzed and the team collectively developed an action plan.

Mr. Todd Wallingford, Curriculum Director for Humanities, spoke about the item level trends with the following highlights:

Teachers/Instructional Staff/ Non- Instructional Staff

- General sense that people respect one another's cultural diversity
- They feel safe and welcomed at their school
- The staff collaborates well together
- There are plenty of opportunities for students to take part in extracurricular areas

Parents/Guardians

- Schools encourage their kids to take challenging courses
- Felt that their kids feel they belong in their schools
- The school is doing a good job encouraging them to be active participants in their child's education
- They feel they are kept in the loop in an emergency or with safety issues
- Parents feel teachers are there for the kids

Students

- Different cultural backgrounds are respected
- Teachers notice when they are absent
- They feel safe
- There are plenty of opportunities for extracurricular activities
- They feel that teachers are pushing them to do their best
- They feel they can reach out and talk to their teachers

Mr. Wallingford went on to say the next step was for the District Leadership Team to sift through the data to find the most high leverage and pronounced places where people feel dissatisfaction. The result was a list that was fit into a matrix. This matrix shows pockets of issues where things could be clustered into single actions covering multiple issues.

Mr. Jason Medeiros, Principal of Hudson High School presented the following action plan highlights:

1. Reflection around culturally inclusive practices in terms of academic programming, courses and materials, and areas of instructional practices. Action steps are:
 - Examine current curriculum materials
 - Prioritize list of materials to be included in FY21 Budget
 - Evaluate High school Inclusive practices to encourage the diverse student population to participate in advanced coursework.

Mr. Smith asked if there will be follow up at the school level. Mr. Medeiros stated that the leadership team looked at the aggregate results, and each principal has their school's particular data available for analysis. Discussion ensued.

2. Bullying and Cyberbullying
 - Review and revise policy, prevention and intervention plan
3. Support of students with IEP's
 - Use tool of MTSS for assessment of best practices and potential areas of growth
4. Student Discipline
 - Review policy
 - Review handbooks
 - Evaluate protocols and practice
5. Social Emotional Learning
 - Implement district and school systemic student support plan
6. E cigarettes
 - Identify resources for parents and students
7. Involvement of teachers in the decision making process
 - Develop internal capacity for decision making through the Instructional Leadership Team

Dr. Rodrigues stated that the items presented are just some of the highlights of the action plan. There are more steps in the document. The survey validates things we already knew and are already working on in the District Improvement Plan. Dr. Rodrigues shared that we are looking at how the energy and effort of the things we are working on contribute to helping the things that were pointed out by staff, parents, and students.

Mr. Tracy asked if there are any areas where there is a baseline for things that might need immediate action. He mentioned safety in particular. Dr. Rodrigues confirmed that there was. He stated that anything above 15% negative was a trigger. Dr. Rodrigues reminded the committee that sometime there are perceptions without data to inform this. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Smith asked about the student discipline action steps, and the focus on the baseline and procedures. Discussion ensued about different standards across schools.

Dr. Rodrigues stated that we do not discuss student discipline in schools because of FERPA. This requirement can contribute to the perception that discipline is not fair. Dr. Rodrigues stated that the policies need to be cleaned up and there need to be consistent standards. Discussion ensued about the measurable.

Mr. Medeiros pointed out that the only data the state collects is suspension data. He went on to say there is a lot of other data, for example office referrals. Discussion ensued about building nuances and how the data is being recorded.

Mr. Maston made note of a difference in perception between what students and non-instructional staff felt under safety. Discussion ensued. One possible explanation could be the gender of the participants.

Mr. Maston asked Dr. Rodrigues if the goal was a 20% improvement in the survey results per the District Improvement Plan. Dr. Rodrigues confirmed it was the goal.

Subcommittee Reports

Budget Subcommittee

none

Policy Subcommittee

Mr. Smith reported that there will be policies for review at the next School Committee meeting.

Strategic Goals Subcommittee

Mr. Maston stated that they were in the process of trying to schedule a meeting.

Superintendent's Evaluation Subcommittee

Mr. Maston stated that another meeting of this subcommittee is not needed until the mid-year report.

Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee

Dr. Maston stated that this subcommittee had met and the committee would be hearing more on this later this evening.

Student Report

none

V. **Matters for Discussion:**

- a) Old Business
- b) New Business

1. Assabet Valley Collaborative Report

Dr. Rodrigues stated that collaboratives are mandated to report to their respective school committees four times a year. The report this evening is the first report. This report introduces the collaborative, their plans for this year, and highlights the programming and services. It also highlights the accomplishments of the previous year. Dr. Rodrigues commented on what a great support the collaborative is for the district.

2. Discussion of Administration Building Proposal

Mr. Len Belli, Director of Facilities, gave a presentation on the conditions of the Administration Building at 155 Apsley Street. This included envelope studies, anticipated space needs for current administration staff, and school committee room usage for 2018.

He presented the following timeline:

- Winter of 2016-17: bricks and slate noticed on the sidewalk
- Spring 2017: chimneys stabilized by removing loose veneer brick
- Summer 2017: Raymond Design Associates commissioned for Building Envelope Study
- Fall 2017: Findings presented
- Winter 2018: narrow chimney on Lake St. side removed and flashing stabilized
- Spring 2019: Two main chimneys wrapped to contain falling brick

\$56,000 has been spent to date

He went on to present photos of some existing conditions including:

- Exterior Deterioration
- Falling Chimney Brick
- Water Infiltration
- Temperature control issues
- Poor accessibility
- Insufficient space and storage
- Men's Room Conditions

He presented the following financials with estimated repair costs. The cost to repair chimneys, replace the roof with fiberglass shingles, and repair cornice work is \$441,000. This is an important number because it exceeds the 30% trigger requiring us to comply with ADA and Fire Code requirements.

Options:

1. Renovate existing facility for 4.5 M
 - This would involve relocating for 12+ months and does not correct the poor functionality of the building.
2. Long Term Lease or buy an existing building
3. Build new

Discussion ensued about the value of the Apsley Street Building.

Mr. Tracy asked if there was a timeline of action in the envelope study. Mr. Belli confirmed that this had not been extrapolated but went on to say that things will continue to get worse. The things we can do, will not increase the functionality of the building. Mr. Belli also pointed out that construction costs are escalating at about 6% per year.

Ms. Ryan asked about the process moving forward. Dr. Rodrigues stated the last time this was presented to the Board of Selectmen there were a lot of unanswered questions and more information needed. The Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee met with the purpose of putting this information together. Dr. Rodrigues stated that this item would be brought for a vote at the next School Committee meeting. The vote would be to approve the need for a new location of the administration building. The next step would be for the Board of Selectmen to take this up, hear the answers to any of their unanswered questions, and examine the possibilities.

Discussion ensued about where funding would come from.

Mr. Tracy asked what the expectation of a timeline for construction if approved. Discussion ensued about other major capital improvements in our existing buildings we are expecting over the next few years. Mr. Belli shared that we have been effectively chipping away at these and are in pretty good shape. Discussion ensued about not having to ask for other capital improvements on top of a new building.

Mr. Maston asked when the town would finish paying for the High School. Discussion ensued.

Discussion ensued about the square footage requirements. Mr. Belli has provided the GSA guideline for government employees in addition to what he thought was needed.

VI. **Matters for Action:**

a) Old Business

1. **Second Reading and Approval of Proposed Adoptions and Revisions of School Committee Policies J Section, GCBDB**

Ms. Ryan asked for clarification of the number of school committee members required on the sick bank in the GCBDB policy. Ms. Cindy Fensin, Director of Human Resources, clarified that there is one member.

A motion to approve the proposed adoptions and revisions of School Committee Policies Section J and policy GCBDB was made by Ms. Tousignant Dufour and seconded by Mr. Smith. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

b) New Business

1. **Approval of FY20 increase of \$17,968 to the Adult Learning Center Grant**

A motion to approve the FY20 increase of \$17,968 to the Adult Learning Center Grant was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Ms. Tousignant Dufour. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

2. **Reclassification of Funds**

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

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

Dr. Weksner asked about the outcome of the Board of Health vaping forum. Ms. Tousignant Dufour stated that it was a hearing and several people spoke including Dr. Rodrigues and Mr. Maston. Ms. Tousignant Dufour stated that there would be a vote at their next meeting.

Dr. Weksner asked if the School Committee would be having a presentation on vaping by the Board of Health. Dr. Rodrigues confirmed that he was working on getting that scheduled.

Approved

Ms. Tousignant Dufour shared that Paul “Skip” Johnson had recently passed away. At the most recent production at Hudson High drama society his memory was honored before the second act. His wife and sons were in attendance the final night.

VIII. Executive Session

At 8:34 p.m., Committee Chair Glenn Maston noted that Executive session was not needed.

IX. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Smith and seconded by Mr. Tracy. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Tousignant Dufour, Secretary
Hudson School Committee