

Approved

**Hudson School Committee
Open Session Minutes**

Meeting Date: December 10, 2013

Location: Administration Building
155 Apsley Street

Members present: Susan Dunnell, Lynn Valcourt, Jennifer O'Brien, Lorraine Nelson,
Brian Davis, George Luoto and Benjamin Hoell

Members absent: None

Others present: Dr. Kevin M. Lyons, Superintendent
Julia M. Pisegna, Recording Secretary
Alex Schley, Student Representative

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

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair Susan Dunnell.

Committee Chair Susan Dunnell congratulated and welcomed the two newest members, George Luoto and Benjamin Hoell, to the School Committee.

II. Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting – November 26, 2013: A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Valcourt, and seconded by Mrs. Nelson. On a vote of 4-1-2, with Mr. Davis opposing, and Mr. Luoto and Mr. Hoell abstaining, the motion passed.

Committee Chair Susan Dunnell announced that the Agenda would be taken out of order.

III. Special Reports and Presentations

Principal Brian Daniels introduced Quinn Middle School health teacher Courtney Cray who shared highlights of the new health program available at the Quinn Middle School with the Committee.

Classes focus on feelings, empathy, communication, substance use and abuse and stress management. Ms. Cray also focuses on teaching nutrition, fitness, growth and development through a hands-on approach program of skills-based instruction, decision-making skills and goal-setting skills. The students have just completed a stress management session which included yoga, muscle relaxation techniques, deep breathing and meditation, all of which are life-long skills.

Officer Chad Crogan spoke to the Committee members about the DARE Program which is now in its 8th year in the Hudson Public Schools. The program this year is entitled 'Keeping It Real' and focuses on real life events. The students not only learn about drugs and alcohol, but also learn about feelings, how to say no, learning trust, making friends, how to make good decisions and the consequences that come with making bad decisions and bullying.

Quinn Middle School student Jake Sanford shared with the Committee that the DARE Program has taught him to say no to alcohol and smoking, how to make good decisions and trusting in Detective Crogan.

Officer Crogan reiterated that the importance of students trusting him, not only as an officer but as a friend, and that students know that they can come and talk to him at any time.

Principal Daniels commented on the importance of the DARE Program at this age level.

Engineering teacher Eric Ahearn highlighted the Project Lead the Way program now in place at the Middle School which focuses on science, technology and math and teaches students from the very beginning stages of technology and science and follows all the way through to the dimensions, inventions and creations of things.

Mr. Ahearn thanked Director of Technology Ellen Shuck for her assistance in bringing the Project Lead the Way grant to Hudson,

Quinn Middle School students, John Chaves, Oksanna McQuiggan, and Will Gray, demonstrated the new car they built in class and described the function of its parts and the process of assembling it.

Committee Members thanked the students for their attendance.

VI. **Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Lyons welcomed Mr. Luoto and Mr. Hoell to the School Committee and thanked them for their service.

Transportation Update:

Dr. Lyons noted that on the table in front of all members was some late breaking news regarding the District's transportation provider, Atlantic Express, currently in bankruptcy proceedings. There has been a contingency plan put in place, but uncertainties exist. Dr. Lyons and legal counsel are prepared to take action and will continue to update Committee members on any new developments.

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Dr. Lyons assured the community that buses will be running on January 2nd.

Budget Update:

The Budget Subcommittee is scheduled to meet on December 11th to hear budget requests for central office accounts, general expense projections and personnel projections. Finance Director Patty Lange prepared the preliminary FY15 projections for the Budget Subcommittee deliberations about budget requests from Principals and Directors.

Dr. Lyons explained the budget process and noted that the final budget will be voted in June. However, the preliminary school budget will be voted on January 21st. There will also be a School Committee Budget Workshop held, and Dr. Lyons recommended that a community budget forum be held during the week of January 27th.

Discussion ensued.

Visit by Secretary of Education:

Massachusetts Secretary of Education, Matthew Malone, and State Representative Kate Hogan and administrators toured the new Quinn Middle School on Friday, December 6th. Secretary Malone was very impressed with the students as well as the new facility.

PARCC Decision: Dr. Lyons has filed the District decision to test identified classes of students who will take the PARCC field test performance-based tests on MCAS. Testing will be arranged so that these students take the MCAS first.

Administration will emphasize to students and parents that PARCC field testing is only an exercise, and that no results will be provided to the student or District, and that this will be a good learning experience for future testing.

The actual classrooms selection will be at a later time, and principals will communicate with families and students participating in the field tests.

Data Quality Campaign and Hudson Participation in EWIS:

The national Data Quality Campaign has selected Hudson to participate in its production of a video about Massachusetts' efforts to improve data methodologies and data access for students.

Dr. Lyons presented a video clip to Committee members and noted that fascinating discussions are happening at Farley Elementary, Quinn Middle School and at the High School as we are on the leading edge of data usage.

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DSAC Visit and Farley School Improvement Planning:

The DSAC team visited Farley Elementary on December 2nd. The team will assist Farley in putting together an action plan based on all the assessments and observations of the team. The plan will also include professional development.

Innovation Schools Exploration:

The District has begun an exploration of the concept of an Innovation School or schools for Hudson. Assistant Superintendent Dr. Jodi Fortuna has convened a district-wide team to explore the possibilities and potential of applying for authorization for one or more innovation schools for the 2015-2016 school year and the initial interest is strong.

Discussion ensued.

Dr. Fortuna spoke to the Committee on the excitement of the initial reaction and looks forward to pursuing it further.

Dr. Lyons mentioned that Innovative Schools are also a very big interest of Secretary Malone who mentioned that Hudson would have the full support of his office and that his staff would be in contact with us shortly.

School Report Cards Mailing: School report cards are being mailed and Dr. Lyons advised parents that if they had any questions on school report cards, they are welcome to talk to the principals or Dr. Fortuna.

Advertising Athletic Director Position:

Dr. Lyons noted that the Athletic Director job description had been revised by Principal Reagan and Mr. Macedo to reflect current expectations of the Athletic Director position. The revised description will be used for advertising the position.

Discussion ensued.

Dr. Lyons will put the advertising of the Athletic Director position on hold until after the Committee has had an opportunity to review the preliminary FY15 budget.

V. Community Comments

None.

VI. Old Business

None.

VII. New Business

1. Approval of Expansion of On-Line Payment Options for Parents:

The District has the opportunity to expand the on-line payment options for families, beyond the school lunch option. On-line payments can be expanded to include athletic fees, class dues, and student activities fees. Finance Director Patty Lange, Athletic Director Luis Macedo, Teacher and Senior Class Advisor Scott Darling and Technology Director Ellen Schuck have studied various options that could be implemented. Parents paying on-line for the school lunch program consistently express their appreciation for this option.

Finance Director Patty Lange presented to the Committee the on-line payment options available for parents. Several companies were researched through conferences and webinars for comparisons between the companies. The recommended vendor was Horizon. The benefits are to both the District and to parents for utilizing these on-line payment options for payment of student yearbook fees, test fees, class dues, field trips, athletics, lunch and others.

Teacher and Senior Class Advisor Scott Darlington spoke to the Committee on the process for collecting funds from students for travel, especially the Germany trip, and noted the enormous task when dealing with large amounts of cash and checks and the margin for error.

Discussion ensued.

A motion to approve on-line payment options, as presented, on a pilot basis for spring sports and senior class dues, was made by Ms. Valcourt, and seconded by Mrs. Nelson. On a vote of 6-0-1, with Mr. Davis abstaining, the motion passed.

Committee members thanked Ms. Lange for the great information and for the excellent initiative on the part of the District.

2. Approval of Assabet Valley Collaborative Agreement:

Dr. Lyons recommended approval of the proposed Assabet Valley Collaborative Agreement.

Approved

A motion to approve the Assabet Valley Collaborative Agreement, as presented, was made by Mr. Luoto, and seconded by Ms. Valcourt. On a vote of 6-0-1, with Mr. Hoell abstaining, the motion passed.

VIII. Reclassifications

None.

IX. Subcommittee and Building Committee Liaison Reports

None.

X. Executive Session/Adjournment

At 8:40 p.m., Committee Chair Susan Dunnell noted that there was need for Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to or in preparation for negotiations with the Hudson Education Association, because an open session may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee and that the Committee would not return to public session.

Dr. Lyons called the roll:

Mrs. Dunnell – yes
Ms. Valcourt – yes
Mrs. O’Brien – yes
Mrs. Nelson - yes
Mr. Davis – yes
Mr. Luoto – yes
Mr. Hoell – yes

Motion to adjourn the regular meeting and enter into Executive Session was made by Ms. Valcourt and seconded by Mrs. O’Brien. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Valcourt, Secretary
Hudson School Committee

Approved

List of Documents Source and Location

DOC NAME	SOURCE	LOCATION
School Committee Minutes of November 26, 2013	School Committee	Superintendent's Office
Superintendent's Report	Superintendent	Superintendent's Office
Article 'Bus Bankruptcy Bedevils Central Mass. School Districts'	Worcester Telegram and Gazette December 10, 2013	Superintendent's Office
PARCC/MCAS Exemption Registration	Superintendent	Superintendent's Office
Innovation Schools – August 2013 (2)	Executive Office of Education	Superintendent's Office
Article - What Makes an Elementary School 'Essential'? (8)	Essential Schools.org	Superintendent's Office
Hudson High School Athletic Director Job Description	Principal Reagan	Superintendent's Office
Department of Education 2013 Report Card Overview (10)	Department of Education	Superintendent's Office
Online Payment Systems (3)	Finance Director	Superintendent's Office
Amended Agreement for the Assabet Valley Collaborative (33)	Superintendent	Superintendent's Office
Assabet Valley Collaborative Timeline and Amendment Process March 2012-February 2014	Assabet Valley Collaborative	Superintendent's Office
Reclassifications (none)	Finance Department	Superintendent's Office