

Approved

**Hudson School Committee
Open Session Minutes**

Meeting Date: March 24, 2015

Location: Administration Building
155 Apsley Street

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

Members absent: None

Others present: Dr. Jodi Fortuna, 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, Jennifer O'Brien.

II. Approval of Minutes:

Regular Meeting – March 10, 2015: A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mrs. Tousignant Dufour and seconded by Mr. Maston. On a vote of 4-0-2, with Mr. Davis and Mr. Luoto abstaining, the motion passed.

III. Reports:

Student Representative Report

None.

Superintendent's Report – Dr. Jodi Fortuna

District Improvement Plan:

Dr. Fortuna thanked the District Leadership Team for their attendance and presentation to the Committee on the District Improvement Plan.

Finance and Operations

On Thursday, March 12th, Dr. Fortuna, Mrs. O'Brien and Mrs. Lange presented the budget to the Finance Committee.

While the Town acknowledged that they are unable to sustain the increases in services, Dr. Fortuna found their willingness to work together very positive. Both the Finance Committee and Executive Assistant, Mr. Moses, stressed the importance of being

collaborative to plan for future budgets and offered collaboration moving forward. While the issue of administrator salaries was raised, Mr. Moses applauded the “intellectual” approach that was taken to the District’s additional request to identify the problem, a strategy to address the problem, and expected outcomes from the strategy.

The Finance Committee voted to approve the Selectmen’s recommendation 5-1.

Kindergarten Registration

Dr. Fortuna reported that 191 kindergarten students were registered in the District, with 84 students at Farley, 65 students at Forest and 42 students at Mulready. This was the most interest ever in full-day kindergarten with 144 students seeking seats in full-day kindergarten.

On March 16th, the lottery for the 75 available slots across the District was held. There are approximately 69 families on the waitlist for full-day kindergarten. Due to the State recently eliminating the quality full-day kindergarten grant which the District had used to supplement the costs of the program, combined with the loss of revenue, the District currently faces a \$1.9 million budget gap.

On Thursday, April 9th, an organizational meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. at the Administration Building to discuss fundraising for the District.

Discussion ensued.

Town Annual Report

Dr. Fortuna and Mrs. Tousignant Dufour submitted the Annual Town Report as one combined and comprehensive report signaling the collaboration and cooperation between the Committee and the Superintendent.

Dr. Fortuna thanked Mrs. Tousignant Dufour for her efforts and collaboration on this annual project.

School Health and Safety Advisory Council

On Friday, March 20th, the School Health and Safety Advisory Council met to discuss the upcoming SBIRT screening, the Spring Wellness Newsletter and the District’s involvement with the Safe Routes to Schools Program.

Dr. Fortuna will continue to update the Committee on future meetings.

Curriculum and Instruction Update:

Elementary Math Core Resource-Engage NY

Committee member, Allison Hay, asked Dr. Fortuna what other Districts in the State were also using the program EngageNY. Dr. Fortuna reported that the following Districts using EngageNY are:

Athol-Royalston, Narragansett, North Brookfield, Webster, Newburyport, Wachusett Randolph, Deerfield, Fitchburg, Dennis-Yarmouth and Easton.

Math Professional Development – Andrew Chen:

Dr. Andrew Chen returned to the District and conducted another day of professional development with our secondary math teachers with the objectives for the day of high expectations for all students in math and how to engage all students in learning math.

Discussion ensued.

(Ms. Valcourt entered the meeting at 7:18 p.m.)

Farley STEM Night:

On Friday, March 13th, Farley Elementary School hosted STEM night. The event was attended by 102 students and their families and showcased various community members representing careers in STEM fields.

Dr. Fortuna thanked Jeannine Frasier and the planning team for all of their hard work and dedication to the students.

Superintendent’s Items of Interest:

MASS Mid-Winter Conference

On Tuesday, March 17th, Dr. Fortuna attended the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents’ Mid-Winter Meeting where the guest speaker for the event was the new Secretary of Education, Dr. James Peyser.

Parent Advisory Team:

On Tuesday, March 17th, Dr. Fortuna met with the Parent Advisory Team and discussed the District Improvement Plan, the need for increased communication and the budget. The team was very positive about the direction outlined in the Improvement Plan, as well as the changes that the District has already made this year.

Legal Training: Discipline Laws:

On Friday, March 13th, Dr. Fortuna and building administrators received an update on the laws regarding student discipline that changed this year. The presentation tailored to the District was very helpful as administrators could explore past situations and situations they currently experience.

Mystery Reader:

Dr. Fortuna was the Mystery Reader in Mrs. Colbert's kindergarten class and was very impressed by the students in the classroom.

School Visits:

Dr. Fortuna updated the Committee on her professional practice goal of spending one half day a week at each of the schools and this past week visited Quinn Middle School and Forest Avenue School.

Enrollment:

As of this date, enrollments numbers are unofficial. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education collects enrollment data in October, March and June.

Discussion ensued.

Subcommittee Reports:

Committee Chair Jennifer O'Brien noted that the Policy Subcommittee meeting scheduled for March 23rd was cancelled and rescheduled to March 30th.

Public Relations Subcommittee is scheduled to meet on March 31st.

IV. **Matters for Discussion:**

1. **Whitsons Culinary Group Food Service Update – Andrew Lauer**

Drew Lauer, Director of School Nutrition, Scott Berry, District Manager, and Patty Lange, Executive Director of Finance and Operations, presented to the Committee an update on the Food Services Department for the current school year and comparison to previous years, highlighted the breakfast and lunch totals for each school, meals per labor hour, free and reduced lunch applications, revenue lost due to all the snow days, and some of the new ideas they are experimenting with to increase student interest.

Discussion ensued.

Committee members thanked Mr. Lauer for all his hard work and efforts in improving the school breakfasts and lunches.

2. District Improvement Plan – District Leadership Team

After spending eight months analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the Hudson Public School, the District Leadership Team presented the District Improvement Plan to Committee members.

The District Improvement Plan highlights the strategic objectives of learning and growth, high expectations, accountability and consistency to forge the District ahead and the theories of action to achieve those goals which span a three-year period.

Discussion ensued.

Dr. Fortuna thanked administrators for their hard work and commitment to Hudson Public Schools and that she is fortunate to work with such dedicated professionals. Dr. Fortuna also thanked the Parent Advisory Team for their assistance in completing the Improvement Plan.

Committee members thanked the team for their presentation and look forward to continued updates from them.

A motion to approve the District Improvement Plan, as presented, was made by Ms. Valcourt and seconded by Mr. Luoto. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

V. **Public Participation:**

Parent Stella Lortie asked how many calories were in the smoothies that are served at the schools.

Dr. Fortuna will look into that and respond to Ms. Lortie's inquiry.

Parent Stella Lortie stated that the schools are inconsistent with the homework assignments and stated that it would be easier for parents if all teachers in all schools did it the same way.

Discussion ensued.

Parent Stella Lortie reported a concern regarding her seating for the meeting.

Discussion ensued.

VI. **Matters for Action:**

1. Approval of Salary for the Position of School Nurse Leader:

Dr. Fortuna recommended that the Committee approve the salary range for the position of School Nurse Leader as \$65,000 - \$85,000.

A motion to approve the salary range for the position of School Nurse Leader as \$65,000-\$85,000 was made by Mrs. Hay and seconded by Mrs. Tousignant Dufour. On a vote of 6-1-0, with Mr. Davis opposing, the motion passed.

2. Approval of Contract with Classic Construction & Development Corporation in the Amount of \$228,400.00 for Heating System Improvements at Quinn Middle School

Dr. Fortuna recommended that the Committee approve the contract with Classic Construction & Development Corporation in the amount of \$228,400.00 for heating and system improvements at Quinn Middle School.

A motion to approve the contract with Classic Construction & Development Corporation in the amount of \$228,400.00 for heating and system improvements at Quinn Middle School was made by Mrs. Hay and seconded by Ms. Valcourt. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

VII. Reclassifications

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

VIII. Items of Interest

Mr. Luoto reported that the Hudson High School Round Robin appeared to be out of service.

Dr. Fortuna indicated that there was a temporary problem with the Round Robin, but that has been resolved and it is now in full working order.

Quinn Middle School Principal Jason Webster and Leslie Knight, Curriculum Director for Secondary Math and Science addressed questions and concerns raised by Committee members regarding math at the Middle School, the volume and atmosphere of the cafeteria at the Middle School, and reports of bullying taking place at the Middle School.

Discussion ensued.

IX. Executive Session/Adjournment

At 9:18 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 union personnel, because an open session may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position, or legal position, of the Committee.

A motion to enter into Executive Session was made by Ms. Valcourt and seconded by Mrs. Tousignant Dufour.

Approved

Vote by roll call:

Mrs. O'Brien – yes

Ms. Valcourt - yes

Mr. Davis – yes

Mrs. Tousignant Dufour – yes

Mrs. Hay – yes

Mr. Maston - yes

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Tousignant Dufour, Secretary
Hudson School Committee