

Approved

**Hudson School Committee
Open Session Minutes**

Meeting Date: September 27, 2016

Location: Administration Building
155 Apsley Street

Members present: Michele Tousignant Dufour, Allyson Hay, Jennifer O'Brien,
George Luoto, Glenn Maston, Elizabeth Hallsworth and Steven Smith

Members absent: None

Others present: Dr. Jodi Fortuna, Superintendent
Julia M. Pisegna, Recording Secretary

I. Call the Meeting to Order – 7:02 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair, Michele Tousignant Dufour.

II. Approval of Minutes:

Regular Meeting –September 13, 2016: A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Hay and seconded by Mr. Maston. On a vote of 6-1-0, with Mr. Luoto abstaining, the motion passed.

III. Public Participation:

None.

IV. Reports:

Student Representative Report:

None.

Superintendent's Report – Dr. Jodi Fortuna:

District Leadership Team Meeting

The District Leadership Team held its first meeting on Wednesday, September 14th. It was a productive meeting as the team discussed roles and responsibilities in decision making so that the entire team has common language on expectations regarding the making of decisions. One issue that was recognized was the number of meetings that administrators attend outside of their buildings on school days. In recognition of how valuable a resource time is, the team is piloting a restructuring of the meeting format. In order to do this effectively, three main areas of work were identified that the team needed to complete to

move the District forward and meet the expectations that were set in the District Improvement Plan. The three areas were hiring procedures, student success teams, and success criteria. The resultant task forces and their goals as follows:

Primary Goal:

- Develop standard operating procedures and best practices for hiring

Key Activities:

- Review current practices and timelines;
- Develop new and/or revise current forms and processes for efficiency and compliance;
- Explore options for automation; and
- Develop/enhance communication as a candidate moves through the hiring process

Subcommittee Members:

- Cindy Todd Brian
- Ana Ellen Melissa

Primary Goal:

- Establish consistent data based process and protocols for student success teams at all levels to insure responsive instruction and/or support services for students

Key Activities:

- Work collaboratively with special education improvement team;
- Develop a plan to create shared ownership for Building Curriculum Accommodation plans and the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (D-CAP);
- Develop a communication plan to include teachers and parents; and
- Determine professional development needs of staff for successful implementation

Subcommittee Members:

- Cathy Erin Lee
- Matt Miriam Dave
- Angie Dan Jason

Primary Goal:

- Define metrics of performance relative to the District’s mission in order to assess success and stimulate progress

Key Activities:

- Define metrics and evidence;
- Align metrics with our DIP; and
- Communicate metrics for inclusion in District documents including SIPs

Subcommittee Members:

- Leslie Karen Josh
- Rachel Patty Kelly
- Amy

As a result of adopting this subcommittee structure and the need to have “all hands on deck”, the District Leadership Team meetings will consist of two parts. For the first two hours, the subcommittees will have a blended meeting using a combination of face-to-face and a virtual platform. The blended format will allow every administrator to attend and be an active participant without leaving a building regularly unattended. The final hour of the meeting will be conducted using a more traditional format.

Administrator Council

The Administrator Council is a group of five administrators elected by their peers to serve as a smaller advisory team that is more nimble in making decisions and debating issues. The group met on Tuesday, September 20th. The topics discussed were how to best develop a budget that meets the needs of the entire District moving forward and allowed for prioritization of needs with a K-12 view. The team also discussed how to best recruit teachers for the skillful teaching course and how to structure the final “traditional” leadership meeting on September 27th.

The District Leadership Team had its first session of Analyzing Teaching for student results on Wednesday, September 21st. Dr. Fortuna spoke with several members of the team afterwards who said that they found it helpful. The District’s facilitator teaching both the team’s course and the teachers’ course analyzed where we were in relation to our current practices and the District Improvement Plan and quickly realized that the course could be tweaked to better meet the District’s needs and will rewrite portions prior to the next meeting so that it will precisely meet all needs.

Finance and Operations

CHAPS Partnership

Dr. Fortuna spoke with Steve Freitas and invited him to speak about the District’s Partnership at the October 11th School Committee meeting. The initial transition to the District’s new programming model has been overwhelmingly positive, including staff members working in the parking lots assisting students and parents, the positive comments he has received from staff and families, as well as the responsiveness of the amazing building and grounds staff whenever an issue arises.

RADAR Project DESE

The District has been accepted into DESE’s project to pilot a new set of Resource Allocation and District Action Reports (RADAR) to support strategic planning and budget decision making and to help the Department develop tools and resources that can be useful to districts statewide. The District was selected from among a number of applicants based on the thought put into current efforts to use resources strategically, and the District’s expressed desire to improve resource allocation. This pilot will begin in the fall 2016 and continue until fall 2018.

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The aim of this project is to provide the District with:

- More and better data in easy-to-use reports to inform resource allocation decisions;
- Training on strategic budgeting from our partners at the District Management Council;
- Workshops and protocols that you can use for budgeting in your district; and
- Opportunities to provide feedback and shape the RADAR tools

Dr. Fortuna and Executive Director of Finance and Operations, Patty Lange, attended an all-day meeting on Friday, September 23rd, at Worcester State University, that brought together teams from all seven pilot districts for a training session on strategic budgeting practices and an introduction to the RADAR tools and reports. Dr. Fortuna will be looking for a School Committee member who would be interested to attend future meetings.

MCAS 2.0

DESE is requiring all students in grades 4 and 8 to take an electronic version of MCAS 2.0. DESE has released the technical specifications for running the test and given that it will be able to run on Windows 7. The District is in good shape as far as having the hardware to make this happen in the spring. Dr. Fortuna participated in a conference call this past week for the requirements and expectations regarding administering the test online. This will be a heavy lift for the database specialist, the entire Technology Department, the Office of Student Services and the ELL Director. One of the largest changes is related to testing accommodations for students with diverse learning needs and how the accommodations are accessed and reported. Dr. Fortuna will keep the Committee and the community apprised of the developments.

Curriculum and Instruction Update

Curriculum Review Task Force

The District had 31 teachers apply to be members of the Curriculum Review Task Force. The District selected 22 members from this terrific pool of applicants. The decision was a difficult one for the Curriculum Directors to make. The work that they do will bring the curriculum to the next level and is critical to meeting the objectives of our District Improvement Plan.

MCAS Scores

DESE will be releasing the MCAS scores and accountability ratings from embargo on Monday, October 3rd.

Last year marked the beginning of a transitional phase in regards to the state-mandated testing program. The 2015-2016 school year was the last year for the administration of MCAS in grades 3-8. In 2015-2016, every district was given the option to administer PARCC, either computer-based or paper and pencil, or administer MCAS. Hudson opted to stay with the MCAS because all districts are required to change to the MCAS 2.0 in the

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2016-2017 school year and the District did not want to put our students or staff through two transitions.

As a result of the District's decision, combined with a similar one made by other districts, the State is not releasing state-wide data because it is not reliable. It will be impossible to measure how our students did in relation to the State average.

This school year, 2016-2017, is the first where every District is required to administer the MCAS 2.0 and all students in grades 4 and 8 will be required to take the test on a computer. If that were not enough, rolled into the transition to MCAS 2.0 and the passing of the Every Student Succeeds Act is the fact that the State is studying and potentially revamping the accountability system. This leaves the District in an unstable position when it comes to having meaningful and reliable data to assess our progress on until 2017-2018. The sample size of districts administering MCAS in 2015-2016 was too small and 2017-2018 testing will provide a baseline of how students perform with a new assessment, that is purported to be quite different from the old, and 33% of students will be taking that new assessment on an unfamiliar platform. It is important that we do not underestimate the impact that computer based testing has on student performance. The current data, gathered by DESE, has demonstrated that students who took a computer-based assessment scored lower on the assessment than student did taking a paper and pencil test.

A very preliminary analysis shows that year to year, our scores remain statistically flat at all grade levels. One promising shift may be in the area of math, at the elementary level, where the District possibly seeing more students score advanced.

A very initial review of accountability data shows that when compared to last year, the District improved in the majority of areas examined but were still below the gap narrowing targets set by the State. These targets were set four years ago. The District continues to try and "catch up" to the targets set for us through the accountability system. Farley remains a level three school despite some significant positive changes occurring there over the past two years. All of the remaining schools in the District are classified as level two schools.

Next year is the first year with MCAS 2.0 and computerized testing for students in grades 4 & 8. The District will be reestablishing a baseline of data moving forward as students take the next generation of assessments that are designed to move them towards college and career readiness.

Superintendent's Items of Interest

Dr. Fortuna announced that the Administration/School Committee joint potluck dinner and book group discussion is scheduled for Tuesday, October 4th from 6:00-8:00 p.m.

PTS Ceremony

Dr. Fortuna thanked Chairperson Dufour, Vice Chairperson Hay, and Mr. Maston for attending the second annual Professional Teacher Status Ceremony. This is a special night and exemplifies what is best about Hudson. The supportive colleagues who present exhibit such pride in the accomplishments of their peers, and serves as another example of the positive professional culture in Hudson.

Enrollment

All enrollment numbers are up to date as of the writing of this report. They are unofficial numbers. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education collects snapshots of enrollment data three times per year October, March, and June. I will provide you with monthly enrollment numbers so that you can be aware of the amount of fluctuation that may or may not be occurring on a monthly basis.

	5/20/16	9/9/16	9/22/16			
HHS	968	941	943			
QMS	649	648	642			
Farley	498	485	488			
Forest Avenue	340	325	325			
Mulready	260	248	249			
District Total	2,715	2,647	2,647			

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By the Numbers: September 13 –September 27, 2016

- 42 email conversations (at least 3 exchanges in conversation)
- 156 email exchanges (no more than 2 exchanges in each interaction)
- 2 tweets to 850 followers
- 7 meetings with individual staff members
- 6 meetings with groups of Administrators
- 1 District Leadership Team meeting
- 1 School Committee member meeting (Chairperson)
- 1 mentor meeting re: Boston College PCAP Program
- 3 school visits
- 1 labor management meeting
- 1 Department of Elementary and Secondary Education conference call
- 1 Professional Teacher Status Ceremony
- 1 First Day of Graduate Course: Analyzing Teaching for Student Results
- 1 Budget Analysis and Resource Allocation Pilot Conference (DESE)

Subcommittee Reports:

None.

V. Matters for Discussion:

1. Discussion of Improvement Plan for Special Education – Cathy Kilcoyne:

Director of Student Services, Cathy Kilcoyne, shared the following update on the changes the District had received from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regarding the grant 240/274:

- “HPS is a level 3 school which has created Hudson as a Public School in Need of Technical Assistance
- Last year DESE announced the intent of Level 3, 4, and 5 schools to use an undisclosed portion of the 240 (IDEA entitlement grant) for the improvement of performance issues identified in the accountability system. We are level 3 in the accountability system.
- The district had a choice to use up to 4% of the grant or 15% of the 274 (Special Education Improvement) grant. Because the 240 grant needed to be filed by September 1st this year and the 274 grant had not been issued (and typically is not issued until September or October), the District used the money out of the 240 grant which totals \$29,665.16.
- DESE has called the reallocation M³. M³ stands for Making Money Matter and is designed to use federal funds in ways to lead to improved outcomes for students with IEPs.
- There are 7 core Principles in the M³ Planning process:
 - Students with IEPs cannot wait for incremental improvement in educational systems.

- There needs to be a grounded cycle for continuous improvement informed by data, driven by results and a **laser-like** focus on implementation of a few high-leverage strategic objectives.
- Time, attention and commitment are required from district leaders as part of daily work.
- Progress focuses on outcomes to serve best needs of students with IEPs.
- Collaboration between stakeholders.
- Willingness to challenge and be challenged, assess challenges, confront change and make mid-course corrections based on analysis.
- Provide regular monitoring and accountability to accelerate improvement process with ongoing feedback.
- This is a multi-year commitment.
- We are directed to use this year to create a plan for future years which already align with our District Improvement Plan.
- Work with District and School Assistance Center Teams prior to beginning the M³ planning to take advantage of the resources, tools and support that make sense in our improvement process.
- Use the Planning for Success process, which is similar to the process used to create our District Improvement Plan.
- DESE's Theory of Action
 - IF we carve a portion of entitlement funding and require it for district improvement of student performance outcomes;
 - And, provide the following technical assistance –
 - Direction of 2% - 4% of funding for planning in the first year,
 - Assist in student outcome data review and analysis,
 - Require system capacity self-assessments,
 - Require identification of and planning for the implementation of high impact evidence-based strategies, highlighted through U.S. Department of Education technical assistance and dissemination center websites, e.g. <https://www.osepideastthatwork.org/>, and
 - Require communication with current ESE technical assistance and supports e.g. Regional Assistance Directors (RAD);
- THEN districts will identify system gaps and can identify high impact evidence-based practices that may fill those gaps;
- THEN districts will build capacity and systems to implement identified practices with fidelity;
- SO THAT student performance outcomes will improve.
- Using data from the effectiveness of programs and indicators, we will identify key issues, and challenges, develop priority areas of need, explore root causes to collaborate to identify overlapping strategic objectives and initiatives to best use in the district for all students

Next steps:

- Met with Standing Committee Meeting September 14, 2016 to update and thank them for their work.
- Present this update to the School Committee on September 27, 2016.
- Contacted DSAC for assistance and inquire about webinars through an email on September 20, 2016.

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- Create a planning timeline to present to Special Education Standing Committee and perhaps additional District Leadership.
- As a group, analyze District data and form goal areas.
- Create a multi-year plan integrating data, Walker Partnership Evaluation and work of the Standing Committee.
- Additional work dates will be set around District calendar.”

Discussion ensued.

2. Discussion of Baseline Data Regarding Parents Perceptions of Preparations for Transition To and From Quinn Middle School – Dr. Brian Reagan and Mr. Webster

Quinn Middle School Principal Jason Webster presented to the Committee feedback regarding the transition to grade 5 night and shared information gathered from the survey taken by parents which indicated the following:

- Most parents felt they received adequate notice about informational meetings regarding their child’s transition to school;
- Most parents felt they were notified about informational meetings regarding the transition to middle school via email, and secondly by the Principal’s weekly announcements;
- Most parents found the information about transition to the middle school helpful in their role as a parent; and
- Most parents felt that their child left the informational meeting feeling more comfortable about the first day of 5th grade

Further feedback highlighted the following:

- The event should not be held the night before the first day of school;
- Open house should be held later than 5:00 p.m.;
- Quinn Middle School Transition Night should not be held at the same time as the High School Transition Night;
- The event was informative, but it was difficult to meet teachers on such a busy night; and
- The presentation of 5th grade curriculum should be given by each individual team, as opposed to a collective grade level group

Discussion ensued.

Committee members thanked Mr. Webster for a successful and informative event.

Hudson High School Principal Brian Reagan presented to the Committee feedback regarding the transition to grade 8 event and shared information gathered from the survey taken by parents which indicated the following:

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- Most parents felt they received adequate notice about the open houses for incoming 8th grade students at Hudson High School;
- Most parents felt they were notified about the Hudson High School open houses for incoming 8th grade students via phone calls, and secondly by the letter form the school sent in June; and
- Most parents found the information presented at the open house very helpful in their role as a parent

Further feedback highlighted the following:

- Avoid holding the 8th grade Transition Night and 5th Grade Transition Night on the same date;
- Student tour guides should have been given more training;
- Parents should go on the building tour with their children;
- Consider holding a transition event (fly-up day) at the end of the 7th grade school year; and
- Do not hold this event the night before school opens

Discussion ensued.

Committee members thanked Dr. Reagan for a successful and informative event.

3. Process for Superintendent Contract Negotiations – Ms. Tousignant Dufour

Committee Chair, Ms. Tousignant Dufour, discussed that the Committee is coming into contract negotiations for the start of July, 2017 for Dr. Fortuna, as the Committee is aware, but in case the District community was not, and suggested that in the beginning, the first meeting, so that there would be input from all parties, add an additional half hour onto the first budget meeting scheduled for October 26th to discuss how the Committee would like to proceed and suggested that the Committee go over the contract as it stands, highlights what may need to be changed, and then from there decide what meetings need to happen after that, whether the full committee or individuals.

Committee member Ms. Hay shared that she feels it would be a good idea to have the full committee, that she felt it was helpful during the evaluation process and putting the evaluation together, and to get everyone's thoughts and input is important.

Committee Chair, Ms. Tousignant Dufour, asked Committee members for their thoughts, and there were no additional comments made.

VI. Matters for Action:

1. Approval of the Change of Status to the Student Activities Fund for Hudson High School Class of 2006

Dr. Fortuna recommended approval for the transfer of \$2,288.01 from general funds to the Class of 2006. The class has until October 31, 2016 to establish the bank account with two signatories from the class or the funds will be transferred back to the student activities general fund.

Discussion ensued.

A motion to approve the transfer of \$2,288.01 from general funds to the Class of 2006. The class has until October 31, 2016 to establish the bank account with two signatories from the class or the funds will be transferred back to the student activities general fund, as presented, was made by Ms. Hay and seconded by Mr. Maston. On a vote of 6-0-1, with Mr. Luoto abstaining, the motion passed.

2. Approval of Hudson High School Drama Society Overnight Field Trip to New York City on April 11-12, 2017

Dr. Fortuna recommended approval of the Hudson High School Drama Society Overnight Field Trip to New York City on April 11-12, 2017.

A motion to approve the Hudson High School Drama Society Overnight Field Trip to New York City on April 11-12, 2017, as presented, was made by Mr. Luoto and seconded by Ms. O'Brien. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

3. Approval of Hudson High School 9th Grade Overnight Field Trip to Washington, DC on April 25-29, 2017

Dr. Fortuna recommended approval of the Hudson High School 9th Grade Overnight Field Trip to Washington, DC on April 25-29, 2017.

A motion to approve the Hudson High School 9th Grade Overnight Field Trip to Washington, DC on April 25-29, 2017, as presented, was made by Mr. Luoto and seconded by Ms. Hallsworth. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

Reclassifications:

A motion to approve the reclassifications of funds marked as No. 1, as presented, was made by Mr. Luoto and seconded by Mr. Maston. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

A motion to approve the reclassifications of funds marked as No. 2, as presented, was made by Mr. Maston and seconded by Ms. Hay. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

Approved

Items of Interest to the School Committee:

Committee Chair, Ms. Tousignant Dufour, shared that she had received great feedback from the open houses and commented how beautiful Mulready Elementary School looks.

VI. Executive Session/Adjournment

At 8:34 p.m., Committee Chair, Michele Tousignant Dufour, noted that there was no need for Executive Session.

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. O'Brien and seconded by Mr. Maston. On a vote of 7-0, the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Hallsworth, Secretary
Hudson School Committee