

MINUTES

Hoosac Valley Regional School Committee
School Committee Meeting
Monday, September 13, 2021 - 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Adam Emerson, Regina Hill,, Nannette Reid, Mike Mucci, Erin Milne, Mike Henault

REMOTE: _____

ABSENT: Bethany DeMarco

OTHERS: Superintendent Aaron Dean

103834 Call to Order

Chairman Mike Mucci called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

103835 Public Comment or Questions - None

103836 Approval of Minutes - August 24, 2021

MOTION: On Motion of Nannette Reid and second by Erin Milne:

VOTED: to approve the August 24, 2021 minutes. The vote was unanimous.

103837 Report of Treasurer/Business Manager -

Berkshire Taconic Fund Grant - \$30,000 vehicle purchase - received a grant to purchase a van for the high school. This is something that will help with the pathways and to bring students to internships and work studies. The order has been placed. It will be a 10 seater and will have the HV logo on the side. This should be ready by January/February. The quote came in at \$31,000, we will have to cover the cost of insurance/registration. Mike Henault asked if there was any extra liability? Will it increase our insurance cost? Erika stated that she spoke with our insurance company, we will need coverage for those driving but it's not a substantial cost. Adam Emerson asked if we have any idea what the additional costs will be? Erika stated she didn't, she just had a preliminary conversation, but he didn't have anything major in changes to the policies. There is no special license required to operate the van.

MOTION: On Motion of Mike Henault and second by Nannette Reid:

VOTED: To accept the \$30,000 grant from Berkshire Taconic Fund to purchase a high school vehicle. The vote was unanimous.

103838 Report of Sub Committee - None

103839 Communications -

A. Kristen Palatt, Director of Curriculum - Aaron introduced Kristen Palatt to the committee. We added this position through the ESSR grants. We are doing a lot of work, we are implementing a number of curriculums with ELA as well as in the middle and high school. We really need someone to man this work. It requires somebody that is an expert in the field and we are lucky to have Kristen. She comes with a wealth of knowledge and experience. Kristen thanked the committee for having her here

and is thrilled to join the HVRSD team. Got the chance to do a lot of benchmarking at the elementary school and the kids are excited to be here. Kristen gave the committee her background experience. We are a year and a half into the pandemic, the research is telling us we need to focus on implementation of high quality curriculum with integrity; intentionally lesson plan to integrate the instructional races that matter most for raising student achievement into our daily teaching; give time and attention to the social emotional well being and needs of students and rebuild agency/efficacy; and to prioritize data analysis to target instruction to the specific needs of students. We need to prioritize through our DIP by continuing the cycle of updating curriculum and expanding teacher repertoire to ensure high quality instruction across content area; we need to examine policies and practices district wide; we need to regularly communicate with families regarding student learning and academic performance at all grade levels.

This year we started off with new ELA curriculums in grades Pre-k-12. We developed a clear instructional focus at each school. We learned together around the research based practices that matter most for raising student achievement and applying those instructional practices to our lesson planning via UbD. We have a new educator orientation and training in new programs and support from coaches and consultants. Where we are now: Rolling out new ELA curriculums; beginning to put a plan in place to reflect on and assess impact of math, science, and social studies curriculums; Living our clear instructional focus at each school and benchmarking to determine students initial skill levels in Math, ELA and SEL; we are learning together around research based practices for raising student achievement through scheduled P.D. opportunities and faculty meetings as well as team meetings. Where are we headed regarding curriculum, instruction, P.D. and Family Communication: We are assessing impact of the implementation of all curriculums; developing a team to explore science as a consideration for program pilots in 2022-2023; observation and feedback and lesson studies; coaching, co-teaching and modeling, and refining the BBT process to meet the needs of students. We are making connections for teacher and teacher teams between all of the great work they are doing and professional learning they are engaged in. Needs assessment of what P.D. we are offering and what the staff need; training and supporting coaches. We will offer curriculum support events; family teaching and learning link pages will be added to the website; Panorama family and students surveys to be sent out. See Power Point Presentation attached.

Mike Henault stated he is excited to have Kristen here. Is the master schedule in all 3 buildings to create the space and time to make this work happen been done? Aaron stated we realize the importance of having the instruction support vision. Middle school has it everyday. The high school has to be a bit creative. The elementary school is similar and we have to take a closer look to be a little more creative. We have one level that has the ideal schedule. Kristen stated that we are committed to figure this out. Aaron stated that we need to work out the contractual pieces. It's a work in progress.

103840 Report of Superintendent

A. Opening day Update - All in all considering everything we have been dealing with, the first week went fairly smoothly. We had to adjust some practices based on what we learned coming out of the gate. Able to make those adjustments fairly quickly. We had 4 COVID cases at the elementary school - brought in the mobile unit and we had 2 additional asymptomatic cases. We made adjustments with lunch, converted the gym into a cafeteria, eliminated breakfast in the classroom. We quickly learned going through the contact tracing, we still have to maintain the spacing to minimize quarantine. Can't say enough about the work from Principal Erin Beaulac and school nurse Ashley Allard, how they handled this so quickly and professionally, it made us have a more solid plan moving forward. The good is that we didn't have a large number of cases,

Went to the football game the other night, sorry we lost but it was nice to see people, kids playing. Really excited for this school year and the potential we have in place.

B. COVID update - See COVID practices updated: Distancing: a minimum of 3 feet physical distancing encouraged whenever possible. At the elementary school, breakfast will be grab and go at the end of the day to be eaten at home the next morning. At the middle and high school there is sufficient spacing for students to eat breakfast in the cafeteria at this time. The gym will be used for lunches at all levels to provide as much physical distancing as possible. BINAX Now rapid testing is available for symptomatic students. A new "test and stay" option will provide an opportunity for students identified as "close contacts" to remain in school and be tested daily. We will follow MA DPH and DESE guidance around this quarantine and isolation. As far as transportation, consistent with state guidance from the spring, there will not be capacity restrictions as there were last year. Windows will be open in normal weather conditions. Masks will be required for all students. Buildings will be disinfected daily and hand sanitizer will be available throughout the buildings. As of now, field trips will be allowed and mask policies will be followed as they would for in school learning. Nannette Reid asked about quarantine and learning? What are the learning steps? Aaron stated that we will give students work to take home. The state is allowing us to purchase online modules, details are still coming, if we have students out of the building for medical issues, long term. Erin Milne asked what is long term? Aaron stated for students that can't come into school because of medical issues regarding masking, etc. Adam Emerson asked about liability if we don't have a mask mandate? Aaron stated that he

would look into this. Mike Mucci asked if we can ask if students have been vaccinated? How can we get those numbers? Aaron will find out how to obtain those numbers. He did get some numbers from Dept. of Health. Mike Mucci asked to table the mask discussion until the next meeting.

103841 Chairman's Report - None

103842 Unfinished Business - None

103843 New Business - Aaron spoke about the lease with Cheshire. What he thought was a settled issue wasn't. Prior to the start of summer we talked about adding a technology room. Finally got the lease back to them - Cheshire decided that the lease was not good enough, there were some harsh comments about what was happening at the last selectmen meeting. They put together a proposed lease and want to have a meeting with a S.C. representative to discuss the lease. Mike Mucci stated that the S.C. Negotiation sub committee should meet with the selectboard. Aaron will connect with the Town and get a date. The negotiation committee is Mike Mucci, Bethany and Regina.

103844 Action Items - None

103845 For the Good of the Order

Erin Milne: thanks to everyone for a smooth opening - everything she hears from students and families, the students are happy to be back in school

Nannette Reid: Welcomed Kristen and thanked her for her presentation

Mike Henault: thanked everyone for a smooth opening. Both his boys love Hoosac Elementary School and speaks volumes with everything everyone is doing and welcomed Kristen aboard

Adam Emerson: the hard work that everyone has put in both new and veteran staff is paying off. The custodians have worked very hard, can only speak of the elementary, they do a vital part and are not always thanked.

Mike Mucci: Nice to see, from the highschool end, seeing kids being kids. Great to have a home football team at Refrew seeing, cheerleaders, band and everyone getting together.

MOTION: On Motion of Adam Emerson and second Mike Henault

VOTED: To adjourn the regular meeting at 7:42 p.m. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Aaron Dean, Superintendent

Lisa Bresett, Recording Secretary

Place: Per Governor Baker's order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting G.L. c. 30a, Sec. 20, the public will not be allowed to physically access this School Committee Meeting. Members of the public can access this meeting via live stream by calling +1-408-650-3123 ; Access Code: 681-412-093 or <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/681412093>