

MINUTES

Hoosac Valley Regional School Committee
School Committee Meeting
Monday, April 11, 2022 - 6:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Mike Mucci, Bethany DeMarco, Mike Henault, Adam Emerson, Nannette Reid

REMOTE: Erin Milne, Regina Hill

ABSENT:

OTHERS: Superintendent Aaron Dean

103918 Call to Order

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

103919 Public Comment or Questions - None

103920 Approval of Minutes - March 28, 2022

MOTION: On Motion of Mike Henault and second by Bethany DeMarco:

VOTED: to approve the March 28, 2022 minutes. A roll call vote was taken (no vote by Regina Hill - audio issues)
The vote was unanimous.

103921 Report of Treasurer/Business Manager - None

103922 Report of Sub Committee -

A. A & E – Mike Mucci stated they discussed the Superintendent's contract; gathering more information. Will table until the next School Committee Meeting.

103923 Communications -

A. Grade 6 students presenting new student handbook -

Grade 6 students introduced themselves to the committee. They presented their project - New Kid (Hoosac Valley Middle School New Kid Handbook) Grade 6 teacher Shelby Gale stated that they have a brand new curriculum and students could choose several recommended novels as part of the social-emotional curriculum and they were interested in the "New Kid". This novel explores issues of race, socioeconomic status and also just what it's like to adjust to a new school. The students came up with these ideas of how it could be integrated into the school and how you can make everyone feel welcome. See attached handbook.

Mike Mucci stated that everyone looks great, nice to see you dressed up and what a great presentation... big round of applause.

Mike Henault: You all presented a perfect example, you read a book, learned how to support your peers, you have empathy and how you want to help new kids. I applaud you for doing this work and your peers could learn a lot from what you did.

Adam Emerson: this is one of his favorite presentations. You should be very proud of the work you have done. What is the one piece of important information you would give if this was scaled down to one page? Students: Probably the PRIDE one because that hits

everything (page 6). Pride explains a lot and that would bring into our whole thing why we are presenting this. Should be all the tips and tricks of making friends... it tells everything we need to know and what things we should do and learn things about the school.

Mike Henalt: Middle school is a pretty scary time. If you had to give advice for one of your elementary school peers coming up, what would you give an elementary school student? Students: Don't give up. Don't try to fit in, just be yourself; Don't make friends with people that don't make you happy.

Mike Mucci: Now that we have this, is there a plan to implement it and what is that plan? Middle School Principal Chris Sposato: Whenever we have a new student that comes in, we will have one of our student representatives give them a tour and present them with our handbook. Mike Mucci: This is a pretty good tool for new students coming in. Great Job

Nannette Reid: I love the fact that it has a personal touch and is very visual, which is great... never read the book, was the making of a handbook part of the content? Students: In the book they never made a handbook, we decided to make a handbook to make them fit in.

Erin Milne: This is one of the clearest pieces of communication to come out of the district. Well done! You did an exemplary job and will make new students feel welcomed.

Regina Hill: Excellent job and should be very proud of yourselves- this is comprehensive and informative!

Bethany DeMarco: great job!

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

VOTED: To accept the New Kid Handbook to be used for new students at Hoosac Valley Middle School. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was unanimous.

Kristen Palatt wanted to acknowledge the 6th grade teachers who gave up their lunches and prep time to make this vision happen.

B. Principal's Update -

Elementary Principal Erin Beaulac: there are a lot of wonderful things happening in all three buildings: PRIDE rallies are happening. We have a pride rally 1 friday a month where we celebrate a word, this month was integrity. Then we introduced the next letter that was chosen which will be diversity. We end every pride rally with a dance party. Our Art teacher applied for a grant and it is for African dance and music, the people that are running it are educators in the area and they teach about African drumming and dance and at the end they will put on a show. Kindergarten students are going on a field trip to Hancock Shaker Village, coming back to field trips is very exciting. . We have 3 steam nights coming up.... Being my first year, trying to learn as much as she can about the school community... part of that is traditions, at the end of the year we have a lot of events going on. Because we have been so heavy with covid restrictions, we are really looking forward to those things and ending on a positive note.

High School Principal Colleen Byrd: Similarly, we have PRIDE events that happen at the high school.. We have monthly PRIDE events, we have a word of the month and every morning, there are quotes that are said about that. Teachers nominate students for "Talk about those Tuesday's" and what part of pride that student represents 8th grade students doing some shadowing in high school classes which is exciting. The rest of the MCAS takes place in May and early June. Finals, trying to figure out our formatting, we have the graduation walk, taking seniors down to the Elementary School on June 1st, classnight June 2nd and graduation June 3rd and busy wrapping up scheduling for next year.

Middle School Principal Chris Sposato: we had our first PRIDE rally, we emphasize a word a month. 6th and 7th graders participated in "say something" which is about awareness and then had Ed Gerrity speak to the entire student body... we will have monthly PRIDE rallies and next year we are looking to align our dates with each school. UDL right now we have 7 staff members enrolled in a course being taught by Laura Casna and staff members that are trained will train other staff in house. Shout out to all students for their perseverance with the MCAS. They have all been doing a great job.

Adam Emerson asked Erin Beaulac to keep them updated on the African dance. Erin stated that it is June 3rd and all is welcomed.

Mike Mucci thanked the principals for the update.

103924 Report of Superintendent -

A. FY23 School Calendar - Aaron presented the FY23 School Calendar (see attached) it mirrors this year - start date for students is August 31st and end date is June 15th.

Adam Emerson asked if there is any discussion from DESE to bring back blizzard bags? Aaron stated that DESE is not interested in bringing that back due to inequities.

MOTION: On Motion of Adam Emerson and second by Bethany DeMarco:

VOTED: to approve the FY23 School Year Calendar. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was unanimous.

B. FY23 School Choice Numbers - Aaron presented the projections for school choice openings. See attached projections. Discussions about how we came up with openings/non openings for each grade level. Aaron stated this is based on the enrollment projections for next year. Talked about offerings at the high school.

Mike Henault: what is being marketed for our pathways? Aaron: We started in house - did a pathways night, redid our website that we will use to promote the pathways and is currently working with a PR in getting this out. We provide options for college and career. There are steps we are taking. Bethany DeMarco asked are elementary students able to see a dress rehearsal when a play is being performed at the high school? This is one way to get younger students involved and to see what we have to offer. Colleen Byrd stated that this is a great idea.

Erin Milne: tonight really showed that our students thrived when we let them lead. Would like to see more of that.

Aaron Dean: We need our students to do the telling.

MOTION: On Motion of Bethany DeMarco and second by Mike Henault:

VOTED: to approve the FY23 School Choice Numbers. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was unanimous.

103925 Chairman's Report -

A. Superintendent's Contract & Salary - Audit & Evaluation will meet one more time. To be tabled until the next meeting.

103926 Unfinished Business - Cheshire Lease: Subcommittee met with Cheshire in executive session. Aaron: It was a good discussion and will wait from the Cheshire Board to hear about the proposal - sent over a 3 year proposal with an outline that we felt was reasonable lease rates per year, based on the discussion with the Town of Cheshire. Waiting to hear back from them.

103927 New Business: None

103928 Action Items - None

103929 For the Good of the Order -

Nannette Reid: great to see the presentation tonight... great job

Adam Emerson: great job by the 6th grade for their presentation.

Mike Mucci: shout out to Mr. Hoosac competition, it was very entertaining, the biggest mix of kids getting on stage and going outside their comfort zone.

Erin Milne: congratulations to all students who worked hard on MCAS and all the teachers that support them.

MOTION:

On Motion of Adam Emerson and second by Nannette Reid:

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 7:34 p.m. A roll call vote was taken. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Aaron Dean, Superintendent

Lisa Bresett, Recording Secretary