

## MINUTES

Hoosac Valley Regional School Committee  
School Committee Meeting  
Monday, September 12, 2022 - 6:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Mike Mucci, Adam Emerson, John Duval, Erin Milne, Regina Hill, Bethany DeMarco

**ABSENT:** Mike Henault

**OTHERS:** Superintendent Aaron Dean

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**103967            Call to Order**

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

**103968            Public Comment or Questions - None**

**103969            Approval of Minutes - August 1, 2022**

**MOTION:** On Motion of Erin Milne and second by John Duval:

VOTED: to approve the August 1, 2022 minutes. The vote was unanimous.

**103970            Report of Treasurer/Business Manager -**

A.            To Reclassify Budget

Submitted herein for your approval is a request to reclassify the FY22 budget to align with actual expenditures. Be it hereby ordered to transfer funds between various accounts as follows: Attached Budget Transfer Request

**MOTION:** On Motion of Bethany DeMarco and second by Regina Hill:

VOTED: To approve to Reclassify Budget. The vote was unanimous.

Erika Snyder also stated that E & D was certified at \$1,022,917 representing 4.96% of budget. Maximum is 5%.

**103971            Report of Sub Committee -**

**A.            Maintenance -** Mike Mucci - met tonight, good meeting, good follow up. Comprise list for both buildings. We prioritized things, met at the elementary school to identify what the needs are. Using ESSER funds to work on these lists. Aaron is doing a great job to use that money to help repairs in the building. Working on issues with the leaks in the gym. We found a contractor to repair 165 windows at the elementary school.

**103972            Communications -**

**A.            Acceptance of \$2,000 Elks donation -** Principal Erin Beulac stated that Keith McLear approached her regarding the Elks wanting to make a donation to the elementary school. Will talk about it as a team to see how to best put it to use. No stipulations for the use.

**MOTION:** On Motion of Adam Emerson and second by John Duval:

VOTED: to accept the \$2,000 donation for use at the elementary school. The vote was unanimous.

**B. Report from Principals on Opening Day:** Principal Erin Beaulac, Christopher Sposato and Colleen Byrd gave brief updates on their building: Erin Beaulac stated that they are trying to align all three schools.

1. SEL update - Erin: we started in August with one day P.D. Training - every classroom starts their day with a greeting, and sharing a message. Immediately saw an impact with this. Has already shifted the culture. The kids are talking about it amongst themselves, this was the right choice for us. We will continue this training. Chris: using positive action - essential units that each teacher expected to use throughout the year. Colleen: using positive actions in grade 8 - one day a week, in combination for the rest of the high school - we do have our WIN block which is in the morning during homeroom 10 minutes a day 5/days a week. Focusing on different aspects of PRIDE.
2. Win (what I need) Blocks - Erin: starting it this year. We create a block of time for 30 minutes, not removing students from ELA, Math, - 12-18 different staff members are all going in and supporting our students. Starting this next week. Making sure everyone of our students are getting what they need. Chris: looks like we did last year, with the expectation of Fridays, which is positive action. Making sure they get enrichment, extra support in math and ela. They don't miss core subjects and get 1 exploratory. Colleen: relationships make results. Rolled out Hoosac rubric, reintroduced to teachers at the beginning of the year. The students will be assessing themselves using the rubric.
3. Collaborative planning - Erin: Assistant Principal of Teaching and Learning running 30 minute, 2x a week collaborative planning with teachers. Other 30 minutes is for the win block, wanting to make sure we are supporting our teachers. Chris: excited to offer to staff, because of the gains we will see with our students. This Friday we rolled out our plan for collaborative planning. Not doing anything new or different, just going deeper with it. Bridget O'Neil Hopkins, our Assistant Principal of Teaching and Learning has been instrumental in this. Colleen: Last year Kristen Palatt worked with us and focused on the FAR cycle. 9 -12 no common planning time, but facilitating meetings during faculty meeting time. Doing nothing new, but also digging deeper.

Kristen Palatt stated that the leadership in the building are doing amazing things. We are also providing a level of support for our new administrations, assistant principal of teaching and learning.

Monica Zanin, Director of Student Services: We offered P.D. this summer and creating these gears and to who is responsible for what, leadership wise. Excited to see it play out. So thrilled to be a part of it. Still learning about the schools- working closely to break barriers with special ed. And general ed. Trying to support our teachers, how can we help? Observing and seeing what the growth areas are and taking it on to create structure to help our students, teachers, want them to see that I am right with them and supporting them.

**C. Nature's Classroom Approval -** Justin Luciani requesting approval for Nature's Classroom for March 6-10, 2023. This will be for grade 6 class. Chris Sposato stated that there will be criteria to be able to participate in this trip (grades, suspensions, etc.). Adam asked what the cost and fundraising would be. Chris will get information on that. Nobody will be turned away for financial reasons.

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

VOTED: to approve the Nature's Classroom trip scheduled for March 6-10, 2023 for the grade 6 class. The vote was unanimous

**D. Sub Rates:** Superintendent Dean reported that he would like the approval of the committee for increased sub rates. Been very difficult in securing subs and want to be somewhat competitive. - See attached rate sheet increase.

**MOTION:** On Motion of Erin Milne and second by John Duval:

VOTED: to approve the increased sub rates as presented. The vote was unanimous.

**A. New Hires - Superintendent Dean:** we have a breath of fresh air with over 41 new hires district wide, teachers, paras and other support staff. Excited about the start of the year. A lot of work we are trying to put into place around the curriculum, P.D., etc. it's all coming together. This isn't the same old district. We have done a lot of excellent work. Aaron introduced Marie Mccaron, special education teacher, Amanda Watrobe, band director, Rebecca Hoell, special education, Gary Duranko, math teacher, and Micaela Scapin, ELA teacher - who were all present at the meeting.

**B. Introduction of Erica Girgenti - Family Community Coordinator/ Jeff Puleri - Athletic Director - Aaron:** excited about these 2 new positions. Erica Girgenti introduced herself. Erica thanked the committee for volunteering their time being on the school committee. A lot of time and hard work, a big commitment. This is obviously a new position at the District. We are trying to set goals by trying to help decrease absenteeism, improve graduation rates and building a better community. Feeling hopeful that we can do a lot of those things. Social media presence has been outstanding. Reached out to new hires asking them to share something that you bring to the table that is just not about the job you got hired for. Trying to build a sense of community with students and teachers. Tons of seasoned teachers, teachers with 20-plus years of experience, coming to us with different leadership skills, those folks made a choice to come here. We have new teachers that taught in Thailand, a teacher that speaks Arabic, a lot of diversity. Really excited about this opportunity, focusing on getting the school out into the community. Would love to connect with the committee, to hear their ideas. Would Like to connect with families that choice out of the district and figure out why and tackle those challenges.

Jeff Puleri: Joint Athletic Director with us and North Adams. Aaron introduced Jeff to the committee.

**C. NTO - Supporting our new staff - Kristen Palatt -** We really wanted to create a new educator support system this year that acknowledged everybody's experience, whatever it is and to be supportive of whatever they need. We have a lot of new people in the district and it is important to let people know what we are doing to support the new staff. This program is also open to all faculty, not just the new hires. We have 41 new staff members, 29 are classroom teachers, and they come with a variety of experience and expertise. We wanted to create a new educator support system this year that acknowledged everyone's experience. We developed a really robust induction program. We have our induction program that is based on 3 pathways: 1. Foundations in teaching; 2. Student Discourse and crossing the rigor divide, high level, next level instructional practices for experienced teachers and 3. Special Education, which is new this year, offering how to write IEP's, goal setting, etc. Making sure everyone is getting the support they need. We had our first meeting today.

Mike Mucci asked what we offered in the past? Kristen: We had started it last year, it kind of was a one size fits all, it was her first year at Hoosac so not sure what was done in the past. Mike M - the induction program is for any teacher? Kristen, yes, it is for anyone, it's more like professional development. Adam Emerson: how was the buying in from the mentors? Kristen - we have fabulous mentors who were part of our orientation. They have been fabulous with our new hires. We are also supporting our mentors. We have scheduled meetings for them throughout the course of the year.

**103974 Chairman's Report - None**

**103963 Unfinished Business - None**

**103975 New Business: -**

Erin Milne asked for an update on COVID. Aaron: a couple of classes that had a few cases in the elementary school. Middle school - a few cases - haven't heard of any in high school. We are not tracking cases. This is now being treated like the flu. We are not contact tracing. With vaccinations, etc. we are in a place where we can handle this in a different way. We are following the CDC's recommendations and guidance.

**103976 Action Items - None**

**103978 For the Good of the Order -**

John Duval: Wishing everyone luck with the upcoming school year.

Erin Milne: Welcome back to school and the energy so far this year has been special and hope to continue throughout the year.

Adam Emerson: Saw the new Athletic Director balancing both schools, extremely professional, Wonderful addition to our district. Being the spouse of a teacher in the district and a father of a student in the district, the positive energy I'm hearing from community members, little kids, big kids, we should take a moment and celebrate.

Regina Hill: The energy for the administration/teachers is great. Erica Girgenti is a great addition. We needed this exposure.

Bethany: good feedback in the community regarding the school.

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

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 7:40p.m. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Aaron Dean, Superintendent

Lisa Bresett, Recording Secretary