

MINUTES

Hoosac Valley Regional School Committee  
 School Committee Meeting  
 Monday, November 7, 2022 - 6:30 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Mike Mucci, Adam Emerson, John Duval, Bethany DeMarco, Mike Henault

**ABSENT:** Regina Hill, Erin Milne

**OTHERS:** Superintendent Aaron Dean

**103979 Call to Order**

Chairman Mike Mucci called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**103980 Public Comment or Questions - None**

**103981 Approval of Minutes - October 3, 2022**

**MOTION:** On Motion of Mike Henault and second by John Duval:

VOTED: to approve the October 3, 2022 minutes. The vote was unanimous.

**103982 Report of Treasurer/Business Manager - None**

**103983 Report of Sub Committee -**

**A. Maintenance -** Aaron Dean reported on the Maintenance Meeting. The committee did a walkaround of the elementary school and took a deep look at what needs to be done. There are still things on the docket for the Town of Adams that need to happen: look at brick work around the building, sidewalks, drainage, a lot of issues have to do with water. Looking to put together along the lines of gutter work and diversion of water for projects with the Town of Adams and looking at ways to use our ESSER funds, sidewalks that are in dire need, looking at pricing some of those. Need to look into the roof. Walked through the auditorium to look at where the water was infiltrating the building. Some major ones were taken care of over the summer. Trying to keep the water away from and out of the building. Mike Henault: The downspout next to the cafeteria entrance does look like it's functioning. Mike Mucci: Did we get the proposal for high school gyms? Aaron: We did not, he will follow up with that.

**B. Policy -** John Duval reported on the meeting. Received an overview of the administrative priorities for the policy for the upcoming academic year. No policy decisions were made during this meeting. Looking for policies for booster clubs and forming a partnership with them especially in terms of monetary things that they might be doing. Looking into the homework policy, we have Williams College interns doing the research on this policy. Failure policy: make sure we have a procedure in place when a student is about to fail, teachers will have certain protocols to follow. The bigger policy is diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging policy, reinforcing our motto: engaging every student every day - this research is also being done by the Williams College interns. THE MASC conference that Aaron, Erin and myself went to, one of the themes was DEI, bringing back a lot of useful information that we can put into practice. Other policies: technology - privacy compliance with our 3rd party vendors; also looking at attendance policy, social media policy and animals in school policy and some updates from Title IX that we are going to put into our policies. Aaron stated that we will be looking into our McKinney Vento policy as well. Started digging into this after some staff attended a training and there are areas that need to be looked at. Mike Mucci: When did we get Williams interns? Kristen Palatt: We started a partnership with Williams college this summer where they pay interns to do internships here, we started with 2 interns this summer. We have 8 interns this winter, and hope

to continue this partnership with Williams. Mike Mucci: Who are they taking direction from? Kristen stated that as of now, it is her, but will be Aaron, building principals, etc. depending on what the project is. Adam: The DEI policy, is that part of what we are going to be looking at all our policies through a DEI lens? John: We have to look at everything through that DEI lens. Mike Henault: compliance from 3rd party vendors, do we know any we are currently using that are not in compliance as far as privacy sharing goes? Aaron: No, last year we made the move to this consortium and they made all the agreements with the 3rd party vendors to ensure our data is secure and this group works with anybody that we are going to contract. Everyone that is an approved vendor has been through the process. The next step is to actually have a signoff for all staff and families regarding our software with the knowledge that these programs that are being used are protected. Mike Henault: the animal policy - not because of a desire to get a comfort dog or is it? Aaron: No, but had a few questions about a class pet, etc. maybe it is time to take a look at that.

#### **103984            Communications -**

A.        MASS/MASC Conference Report - John Duval reported - The conference was November 2nd - 5th. It was well worth the trip and very informative. The conference had 2 themes, mental health post pandemic world- prioritize mental health for students and teachers, and the other is the DEI - what it is, what it looks like and why it's important and what to do to implement it in the district.

B.        Veteran's Day event - The month of November is Respect as part of our PRIDE guiding principles. We are looking to show respect to our veterans. At the elementary level, several classes are making handmade cards to give to our local veterans through the senior center's meal program. The middle and high school are planning a "Halls of Honor" event. Students will be engaging in conversation within the classroom about who they know that are veterans. They will then write the names of those veterans on a paper chain that will be used to connect the halls. On November 10th, we invited veterans (currently we have 12 that RSVP) they will be guided through the halls, starting at the high school then into the middle school. Students will be lining the halls, holding flags (which were donated by Soldier On) allowing the student body to show the veterans respect for their years and dedication to our country. This is a nice event to connect with families and for students to understand the importance of what they have done for us as a country. A lot of positive feedback. The band will be there playing patriotic songs as well.

#### **103985            Report of Superintendent -**

A.        District Improvement Plan - This is a draft DIP in front of you, and will point out some key pieces. This year the plan is not about doing new things, not about creating new initiatives, it's about going deeper into our work. Having a high quality curriculum is not something that is new. We are looking at ways to build upon the work we started last year. Engagement: everyone invested in the work believing that all can achieve at high levels, persisting despite challenges and obstacles, and taking pride in accomplishments. This is an important definition for any school setting. There are going to be challenges and obstacles. Rigor: The result of work that challenges thinking in new and interesting ways. It occurs when they are encouraged toward a sophisticated understanding of fundamental ideas and are driven by curiosity to discover what they don't know. Really looking at getting deeper into the curriculum, getting students deeper into the work to demonstrate their understanding, process in different ways, instead of memorization, looking at ways they can apply it. There is a lot here but it is all based on three objectives: Objective 1: Staff will implement curriculum with integrity and analyze impact on student learning through the use of the Formative Assessments for Results (FAR) cycle and Fastbridge data collection. This is work that will be forever with us. Programming that we implemented in the last few years, we are getting deeper into. The trainings are getting to a deeper level across the district. We have an action, what was done in the past and what we are working on this year. Setting up links to all our resources and data sources as we go along, this is a live document that is going to work throughout the school year. There are 5 actions for our 1st strategic objectives: 1. Training in an implementation of each new curriculum and intervention program; 2. Development of an alignment map to provide clarity and consistency around district approved curriculum and resources at the tier, 1, tier 2 and tier 3 level; 3. Training in and implementation of high leverage instructional practices and the Formative Assessment for Results (FAR) cycle; 4. Installation of a consistent data review cycle utilizing Fastbridge and formative assessment data to drive instructional planning and decision making; 5. Training for and support of building based and district level instructional leadership teams to provide teacher voice in decision making and support staff with program implementation and instructional practice. Rather going through all this you can go on the links to see what we are doing.

Objective 2: Staff will maintain a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for all students by regularly utilizing and reflecting on SEL data to ensure student needs are being met. This is work we are talking about through the policy committee and some of the work with MASC. Will create a DEI committee- representative for all stakeholders to prioritize the work in Hoosac. Having an inclusive district

should be a priority. One piece is getting new students into the district. The Family Community Coordinator is taking a lead on that. What do we do with students coming in and going through the process? How do we make them feel welcomed? She is the liaison and meeting with them. Taking them on tours, walking them through the schedules, getting them some Hoosac gear. We implemented SEL programs. Looking at ways to deal with mental health issues, how to support our students? Adding a student support center at the high school and refining them at the middle and elementary school, especially dealing with updated suspension policies. Maintaining a safe school environment. Adam: the DEI committee, will that include students, community and family members as well? Aaron: Yes it will.

Strategic Objective 3: Communication/Family Engagement: Faculty/staff/administration will create, implement, and/or host a variety of communication strategies in order to support the mission of the district. The addition of the Family Community Coordinator will help leverage that. This position is invaluable in terms of our cabinet meeting and how to get this information out. Regular communication about curriculum about what happens in the classrooms. What you hear and what you see are entirely different things. It would be nice to get stakeholders in to see what we are doing.

If there is feedback, please give it, if there are questions, please ask. Mike Henault: It seems like what Erica is doing is a driver for the 3rd objective and that is an ESSR fund position right now. Are you measuring the effectiveness of the position overall, if it is working so we can add to the budget in the future? Aaron: yes, We are looking at long term revenue sources. Hoping to maintain positions like that. The work is complicated and needs a lot of eyes on it. The APs of teaching and learning that we implemented this year has been key as well. People don't understand the evaluation system and how intricate and complex it is unless you are part of a school system. It is and having more eyes and hands and getting more positive feedback these are all systems we are putting into place to build the capacity for us to grow. These are pieces that have been missing for a number of years.

B. Budget Calendar & Process - Aaron: presented the budget process to the committee. This is a proposed timeline. This is open to change. Would like to get A & E together to review preliminary needs and costs associated with the needs. New governor coming in won't have solid numbers until March. Cheshire Board of Selectmen asked to meet on the 13th and will do the same with Adams Selectboard at some time, to get the conversation started.

Adam: After our meeting with the towns last year, would it be wise to openly invite them to the A&E meetings in January & February so that they can see what the process is and how we came to numbers? Aaron: all we are going to talk about is what the splits are - it will be a preliminary meeting until we get the numbers together. Adam: this is going to be a long budget cycle with a new governor coming in, we can't over communicate with the towns. See attached budget timeline

C. Grants Received - Aaron reported on grants received. We managed to obtain a couple of grants: After School program grant for the middle school - \$90,000. We are in the development stages of surveying students, etc. putting together programming that is interesting to students. Some programs of interest are: dance, guitar, sewing book clubs, social justice club, ASL club, foreign language, yoga, etc. Opening this up to anything and everything - based on the interest - Bethany: last year there was an issue with minecraft and it never happened and it was a huge interest and this would be a big draw. Kristen will look into this. Mike Henault: Does it include transportation? Aaron: Yes it does -

Improving ventilation and air quality grant - \$231,633 to put towards our HVAC ventilation system. Windows at elementary school can be used from this grant. Looking at the high school controls, has been an issue since it has been remodeled. The units are running 24/7. Going to do a needs assessment. The funds need to be committed by 2025 but have until 2026 to complete the projects.

**103986 Chairman's Report - None**

**103987 Unfinished Business - None**

**103988 New Business: - None**

**103989 Action Items - None**

**103990 For the Good of the Order -**

Mike Henault: - shoutout to elementary for the trunk or treat - very well attended for the 2nd year. The CPAC is being promoted and barriers being addressed.

Adam Emerson: trunk or treat at the elementary was great and middle school - haunted hallways, really well attended. Congratulations to the fall athletes on their season.

**MOTION:** On Motion of Adam Emerson and second by Mike Henault:

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Aaron Dean, Superintendent

Lisa Bresett, Recording Secretary