

MINUTES

Hoosac Valley Regional School Committee
School Committee Meeting
Monday, January 9, 2023 - 6:30 p.m.

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

ABSENT: Erin Milne

OTHERS: Superintendent Aaron Dean

104003 Call to Order

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

104004 Public Comment or Questions - None

104005 Approval of Minutes - December 5, 2022

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

VOTED: to approve the December 5, 2022 minutes, fixing a clerical error in paragraph 14 replacing Erin Mucci to Erin Milne. The vote was 4-0-2

104006 Report of Treasurer/Business Manager - None

104007 Report of Sub Committee -

A. Maintenance Meeting - Aaron Dean: we have a running list of projects with maintenance across the buildings. The HVAC grant was able to replace a unit at the high school; getting a quote at the elementary school and having a consultant coming in to look at our units. Controls on the high school - awful lot of maintenance, the units run 24/7, hoping to find a solution to that control issue which has been since the installation in the beginning. Elementary: work on the windows, fire system upgrades, still waiting on a camera installation for the trap door at the entrance. More upgrading internet access. High school: facility/grounds, drainage on the field, taking a look at the defibrillation devices and fully functioning and easily accessible. Both roof gyms are functioning at the middle/high school. Elementary school working on a project list through EDM to prioritize some projects. Continue to look at what the needs are and thankfully at the moment we have resources to address these issues.

104008 Communications -

A. Superintendent's Award - Kathryn Scholz was presented with the Superintendent's award. Principal Colleen Byrd read statements from her teachers, listed her involvement in clubs and sports and read a list of colleges Kathryn has applied to. Aaron Dean reported what a remarkable young woman, who has a great support system at home, and had a key role in Kathryn's success. Mike Mucci: congratulated Kathryn, great honor and well deserved.

B. Spotlight of Assistant Principals of Teaching and Learning - Aaron Dean: important to highlight these positions. These are key positions in moving the district forward to focus on teaching and learning. Really want them to demonstrate the work that is happening. Introduced Kristen Palatt, Lisa Lesser and Bridget O'neil-Hopkins. Regina Diesz is absent tonight and Kristen will fill in for Regina. Kristen: excited to talk about these important roles that were introduced to the District this year. Overall function is on teaching and learning. Dedicated to ensuring all day every day in supporting the teachers, support staff, who are doing the real work of getting the students to learn. One of the benefits of this position has allowed us to work on the alignment of the education experiences pre-12. Rooted in common language, vetted research that allows us to place a focus on accelerated student

learning on a daily basis. At the start of the school year, we challenged our APs to focus their efforts around 4 pillars of work: Curriculum, Instruction, Data & Assessment & Professional Learning.

Lisa Lesser: Curriculum: Curriculum planning twice weekly to identify common instructional practices. Creating formative assessment in order to determine student progress. Using data dialogue to calibrate team academic expectations. Planning with Specialists; Piloting Science Curriculum. In grade 3 looking at the standards within the MCAS. Pulling student work samples to see what the curriculum is asking students to do. How is this meeting the standards? Using different formative assessments to look at that student work. Establishing high expectations for our students and our teaching. Within our curriculum, focusing on student work to understand what the ask is and where the students are at. Specifically student by student and how we can best make them successful.

Mike Henault: stated about piloting a new science curriculum, is there a plan to move science back into the core so it's not just a special at the elementary school. Lisa: We implemented 3 ELA curriculums, that's a large lift to go seamlessly, spent a lot of time looking at wit and wisdom, it's an extremely dense curriculum. Largely focused on ELA We are shifting some of the meetings, one to math and one to ELA, it's naturally where we need to go. Focused more on 3rd grade making sure they are ready for MCAS. Will be working with the science specialists in picking a science curriculum, largely my background. Mike H. Is there a common curriculum in middle school for 4 - 6 science for consistency? Not yet, looking at more common instructional practices. The science curriculum committee will hopefully present something to the committee by the end of the for next year.

Bridget: We are doing the same work at the middle school - meet with grade level 2x week. WIN planning and continued support; meeting with teachers to determine curricular needs; science curriculum committee; Title I support; meeting with district administration to identify district approved curriculum/resources; Last year was a reset for us, with Eureka math and implementation of wit and wisdom. Now we have the first year under our belts, how do we match our curriculum instruction to our students? Done a lot of work looking at formative assessments, support planning as well meeting with teachers outside of planning time with any help they need with curriculum. Meeting with the civics exploratory teachers and how to best support that program moving forward. Recently, spent time looking at the standards that the teachers have addressed up to this point, seeing and planning for next steps in terms of what they are going to get to prior MCAS, what they are not going to get to, spent a lot of time working on that.

High School: Kristen: Regina's focus on curriculum has looked a little different. She is spending a lot of time supporting the writing of the curriculum around the RMR block. Strategies for success unit design for the 8th graders, key in planning and curriculum development, helping with the science curriculum committee, a ton of work with teachers who teach learning lab courses. Has her hands everywhere there is a need for support with the curriculum.

Mike H. A lot of time and resources in choosing ELA and math curriculum materials for elementary and middle last year, working with teachers and planning sessions - are you feeling they like what we picked and are going to be in it for the long run with these curricula Are they struggling? Bridget: ELA - wit and wisdom at 4 & 5 got off to a rough start, big change for teachers, went from using novel based curriculum and instruction to stand and deliver and sometimes a scripted curriculum. We wanted them to follow 1st year to a tee so they can get a feel for it and what worked and what didn't and what improvements had to be made. Moving into year 2, the mood has shifted and you can see it in their faces when they are teaching and see it in the kids. They can see the value in it, it was the buy-in that they needed. Lisa: foundations was an easier transition than wit and wisdom, year 2 will be better and year 3 will be even better. There is no perfect curriculum. You are always going to find faults with it and you need to find time to get to know it. Kristen: constantly working with teachers on what is working and what is not, problem solving to make it easier, to provide coaching or whatever is needed.

Instruction pillar: Common plan Pk-3 and with the specialists using the FAR Cycle; focused coaching plans for teachers; facilitate ILT and staff meetings; participate in building walkthroughs, observation and feedback. Lisa: There are a lot of formal and informal walkthroughs, able to see K-3 and important to bring into meetings. This is where we are and where we need to go. For all formal evaluations, receive a full write up, give feedback, go through notes, any questions that they have about feedback, it's not always an instructional base. Want to make sure the teachers know I am available. ILT members watching other teachers doing the productive talk. It's going really well and people are feeling successful with that.

Bridget: Common plan 4-7 using the FAR Cycle; ATSR training in order to give specific feedback; focused coaching plans for teachers; facilitate ILT and staff meetings; participate in building walkthroughs, observation and feedback. Currently taking the ATSR course, learning quite a bit in the last 3 months, how to be more specific in the feedback to teachers, both formally and informally. Building walkthroughs have been great and eye opening gives us a lens on areas that we need to focus on being able to roll them out to teams during the common plan as well. One area that we plan to bring to the middle school as a result of feedback was a need for some

training and work with productive talk so Lisa will work with her to bring that to the middle school. Matching the curriculum to the needs of our students includes adding instructional practices as well.

Kristen: Running 8th grade common planning meetings using the FAR cycle. Focused coaching plans for teachers. Attending ATSR training in order to give specific feedback during formal and informal teacher evaluations. Run ILT and staff meetings focused on the FAR cycle. Regina does a lot of the same. She runs collaborative planning for the 8th grade team and facilitates the collaborative planning using those instructional practices embedded in the FAR Cycle, creating formative assessment, planning for enrichment or intervention. Focused coaching plans for teachers who have self identified who need additional support. Also attending ATSR. Providing feedback during informal and formal teacher evaluations. Facilitates the instructional leadership team along with Colleen at staff meetings.

Data & Assessment Pillar: Use of Data Driven Dialogue to analyze student work and plan for the next steps; Use of DDD to analyze student screening data; Fastbridge/QPS data reported out to staff and used to drive instruction. Lisa Lesser: Do fall, winter and spring benchmarks, trying to increase our data in literacy. We are in our benchmarking window, when that is done we will have several faculty meetings, and then planning next steps. Understanding that this is one piece of data. Looking at a lot of writing samples, bringing the work to the table to make sure we understand what we are seeing and then looking at the rubrics on how we are scoring. Like to focus on the next step, great to look at the data, but what is the action, how does it come into the classroom.

Bridget: Use of Data Driven Dialogue during common plan to analyze student work and plan for next steps; use of DDD to analyze student screening data; Fastbridge/ MCAS data reported out to staff and used to drive instruction; beginning to create standards-based assessments. Benchmarks 3x year with fastbridge, rolling that out at data meetings, thinking about next steps. Start to brainstorm, what do students need support in and create a plan moving forward. Working with teams to create standards based assessments based on the standards that they have covered so far in the school year to determine where students are at with those standards.

Kirsten: During 8th grade common planning meetings we use DDD to look at and assess student responses. Fastbridge/MCAS data reported out to staff and used to drive instruction. A lot more analysis of MCAS at the high school level both in faculty meetings with ILT. Benchmark end of year data we get from MCAS, spending a lot of work with the 8th grade team putting student work on the table. Analyze the student writing samples and making a plan for the next steps based on the writing samples. They set an expectation for writing.

Professional Learning Pillar: Facilitate ILT, faculty meetings and P.D. days. New Educator Induction Pathway 2; Working with WW consultants to provide teacher support. Lisa Lesser: Most half day PD are for responsive classrooms - within that doing the new teacher induction, working with the wit and wisdom consultants to say this is where we're at.

Bridget: Facilitate ILT, faculty meetings and P.D. days; supporting the roll-out of Ready, Set Math (math recovery) and SRSD; New Teacher Support Team meetings. Had the pleasure of leading one of the whole staff faculty PD day on the rigor divide, which was a great day where the next steps talking about student discourse came from. A lot of work with math recovery and supporting our special education teachers. Hold 1 to 2 meetings a month for new teachers, from going over teachpoint, frontline, how to pre plan for parent/teachers conferences, really supporting the work that Kristen and Lisa are doing at their induction program but bringing it back to the school level as well.

Kristen: Facilitate ILT, POG, Survey's around WIN?RMR, Lab and strategies courses. Implementing practices rooted in research such as "The impact cycle" and "Powerful Task Design" in order to facilitate professional learning opportunities for staff around Rigorous and Engaging Tasks. Regina is doing a lot of the same. Co facilitating the ILT with Colleen, Co facilitating the portrait of a graduate with me. Facilitating collaborative planning, faculty meetings, etc. Colleen and Regina are doing their own professional learning, sourced through Portrait of a Graduate, where they go into other schools to see what they are doing. Just got back from Colorado visiting high schools that are functioning differently than we do and bringing it back to staff to help plan for the future.

Mike Henault: great to hear you speak with passion about something that is so important. - Sounds like you have professional learning in supporting the new curriculum material. How are we measuring the impact on students other than fastbridge? Kristen: Ultimate measure is impact on student learning. We need to see improved MCAS scores grades 3 - 10, fastbridge is a data point but not the ultimate data point. We are looking for all the measures of student learning at the lesson level. The big measure will be impact on student learning based on our MCAS scores. Talked about looking at our walkthrough data, as another data source, tracking the same instructional practices, throughout the last 2 years, and provided feedback to teachers on that. Increased implementation of instructional practices. Another data source, teacher evaluation, less about teacher ratings and more about the targeted feedback we are providing to improve instruction.

Regina Hill: MCAS scores come through and we don't see the growth we are hoping for? Are we looking to see what we can do differently? Map out strategically? Kristen: Yes, constantly looking at that. What we tend to see is that we put our eggs in the basket and we see a lot of growth in that basket and then this one we don't see the growth we want and then shift our focus to this one, it's a constant balancing act. MCAS performance is not the be all and end all of what we are doing, but it is a measure of whether we are having an impact.

Adam: Can we get this presentation more in layman's terms for the public, for them to understand the value of these positions and the work you do. This was a budgetary change, as we come into the budget cycle, it might benefit us for people to see what these positions are doing and the amazing work you are doing. Maybe send it out in a Superintendents' report? This isn't inflating the budget, it is serious work. Aaron: We wanted to spotlight this so that we can show how important these positions are. Kristen will work with Erica Girgenti to get a condensed spotlight to put in the next Superintendent's report. We have the right people in those positions, which is important too.

104009 Report of Superintendent -

A. Budget Process - this year is more complex than most years, dealing with ESSER funds, contract negotiations with several of our units, do not have firm numbers from the state and won't have until March. Have to put together some estimates. At cabinet meetings, we are focusing on what the needs are. Been fortunate to be able to update curriculum, technology and provide P.D. with high level organization because of the ESSER funds and address many of the maintenance things. We have a year left of the ESSER funding that we will be utilizing and then our budget is our budget. Will continue to look for grants to support us in our work. The next year or two will be crucial making the main thing in the budget and making sure we protect what is in the budget, and making sure the ESSER spending is not being used to maintain crucial positions and then they are wiped out. Constantly looking at those pieces. Looking at programs and resources in each of the buildings and where we need to adjust the resources. Erika: Kristen has been helpful in establishing what our consumable needs are that we need to establish in our budget. There are no consumable lines in our budget. We need to find a way to migrate those items out of grants into the budget. So many question marks this year that we have to navigate as best guesses, which is complicated.

Mike Henault: Will the operational budget that we will be presented with have the core needs moved into the operational budget from ESSER so anything that we see in this year's budget that remains in ESSER are sort of things that we are ok with going away in a year? Erika: It's a work in progress. Aaron: In theory, that would be the case, this is what we have been trying to accomplish. Our plan is to slowly migrate so by the end of next year we have gotten everything. If you don't have everything, what government sources are out there to help us? The state is still sitting on some money from the stimulus money so hopefully it will give us some grant opportunities.

Mike Mucci: Talk about ESSER ending, talking September 2024 get us through our next fiscal budget? Erika: Gets us through all of FY24 and extends into FY25 which is September 2024. You have to have the funds earmarked and spent. Outlined the process before, between now and the next meeting what are the next steps? Aaron: Erika and I will be meeting with the principals, Special Education Director, etc. looking at our programs and resources. Is there a better way to spend our Title funds? Are there other things we can do? Are we seeing what we want to see from the programs and what we want to do to support them? Can the grants support more SACS and mental health services? Putting everything on the table and looking at those pieces. What are our next capital projects? Will put our first A & E meeting towards the end of the month.

B. SIP Adoption - Looking for a vote to adopt the SIP plan.

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

VOTED: to approve the District Improvement Plan as presented at the last meeting. The vote was unanimous.

C. Paraprofessional - teacher sub stipends - In the beginning of the year, we upped our teacher substitute rates, trying to get subs in the building. We are dealing with 5 - 10 staff out per day, per building, we need to utilize our paraprofessionals to sub for teachers when they are out. They are the glue that holds everything together. When they sub for teachers, there is a stipend attached. The reality is it is part of the para contract, as well as their pay rates, benefits, etc. a little tricky making a change mid cycle for something like this. You are usually bargaining a package and it all comes together. We should be doing something to raise that rate, for the time being, until the negotiations. Putting forward a recommendation to raise the compensation rates. Currently if para sub for a teacher for less than 1 hour, they get an additional \$5.00; if 1 to 2 hours they get \$10.00

if over 2 - 3 hours - \$15.00 if more than 3 hours - \$30.00 - would like the rates to change to \$10.00/\$15.00/\$25.00/ & \$50.00. See attached current and proposed rates: We are relying on the paras to fill these key positions, we can utilize ESSER funds to get us through the end of the year. Will assemble an MOA with ACTA to make this change. Recommend sunseting it at the end of this contract so that we can negotiate in the next contract. Recommending the committee to authorize Aaron to create a MOA to outline the terms that were discussed.

MOTION: On Motion by Mike Henault and second by Regina Hill:

VOTED: To approve the authorization to create an MOA as outlined above to increase paraprofessional teacher substitute rate. The vote was unanimous.

104010 Chairman's Report - None

104011 Unfinished Business - None

104012 New Business: - None

104013 Action Items - None

104014 For the Good of the Order -

John Duval: Congratulations to Katie Scholz on achieving the Superintendent's award. You have a bright future ahead of you.

Adam Emerson: Congratulations to Katie

Mike Henault: Thanked the APs of Teaching and Learning for coming out tonight and speaking with such enthusiasm and knowledge.

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

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 7:54 p.m. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Aaron Dean, Superintendent

Lisa Bresett, Recording Secretary