



**Hastings-on-Hudson
Regular Board of Education Meeting
Tuesday, January 24, 2023**

Members present

Doug Sundheim
Jeremy Galland
Silvia Robles
Alexander Dal Piaz
Damaris-Lois Lang
Doreen Bucher
Maureen Lennon-Santana

1. OPENING OF MEETING

A. Call to Order

1. Meeting called to order at 7:33 PM by Alex Dal Piaz

2. STUDENT REPORT

A. Student Report

Gus Renzin and Elianna Carvalho, Student Liaisons
Student Report

Midterms:

It's midterm week! As we close in on the halfway mark of the 2022-2023 school year, High School Students as well as most Eighth graders are being tested on their grasp of the material covered so far. Tests often weigh heavily on academic averages, so midterms are a stressful period for many, but, thanks to 4 days without classes, students have plenty of time to study and mental health resources are plentiful. Guidance counselors, as always, are available to chat.

SADD Club Stress Balls:

Yesterday after school the SADD club, overseen by Ms. Repp, handed out stress balls in the lobby for midterm week. The stress balls came in all different colors, decorated with a smiley face. Members of the club were spreading a positive message that everyone should rest well and stay focused during the week, hoping the stress balls would help calm nerves.

Peer Leadership Student-Teacher Fishbowl:

As Dr. McKersie learned firsthand, this week was High School Peer Leadership Program's student teacher fishbowl. During their lunch period, teachers joined Senior Peer Leaders and their groups of 10 freshmen for a special opportunity to connect outside of class. Teachers and students shared funny stories, discussed the strengths and weaknesses of Hastings high school, and most importantly, helped each other to realize that, despite the natural friction that can occur in a district with such a high academic bar, we're all, ultimately, on the same team.

One Acts:

The one acts last Thursday and Friday were a hit. Entirely student acted and directed, the skits garnered laughs and demonstrated the sheer creative force fostered by a Hastings Education. All profits made from ticket sales were donated to local charities including the Hastings Food Pantry. Big shoutout to Catie Cho, Lionel Munch, and Erik Ghalib for leading the charge.

National Honor Society:

This year's senior class has 70 members of the National Honor Society, the most in Hastings High School History. The NHS has been putting them to work supporting education and service here in Hastings. Members have already provided over 200 hours of free tutoring to Hastings Students, and by the end of the year, they will have accomplished over 350. Thanks to senior Louis Bagtas' initiative, NHS is also offering drop in tutoring at the library during midterm week. In addition to tutoring in the middle and high schools, NHS is also running initiatives at the Elementary level: led by Bliss Johnson, seniors are organizing winter projects for kindergarteners. NHS is also running a cafe in the High School, designed to fundraise for future projects.

Seal of Biliteracy:

Last week, Seniors received letters regarding the NYS Seal of Biliteracy. According to the NYSED, "The NYSSB recognizes high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in English and one or more world languages. The intent of the NYSSB is to encourage the study of languages, to identify high school graduates with language and biliteracy skills for employers, to provide universities with additional information about applicants seeking admission and placement, to prepare students with twenty-first century skills, to recognize the value of language instruction, and to affirm the value of diversity in a multilingual society."

Hastings High school seniors who have progressed through level five of the French or Spanish programs are eligible for the seal, and each year, more and more students pursue it, a testament to our excellent language department.

High School Musical Interest Meeting:

The interest meeting for the upcoming high school musical, directed by Laurie Walton, is scheduled for February 6th at 3:15. There they will discuss possible options for the upcoming show and get a view of who is interested in being part of the cast and crew. Auditions will be held the following week.

Junior Guidance Meeting:

It's now that wonderful time of the year where Juniors have begun having meetings with their guidance counselors and parents to discuss the future. At each student's personal "Junior Meeting" they choose their classes for the following year and start talking about college! The meetings are held both in person and virtually.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Public Comment

- No public comment

4. PRESENTATIONS

A. Concussion Procedure Update

Andrew Wendol, Athletic Director presented the following Concussion Management Protocols for Athletics and Non-Athletics to the Board:

[Click here to view the slide presentation](#)

[Click here to view the video presentation and discussion](#)

B. Initial Budget Presentation

Maureen Caraballo, Business Official presented the following Initial Budget to the Board:

[Click here to view the slide presentation](#)

[Click here to view the video presentation and discussion](#)

5. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT

A. Update & District Highlights

Superintendent Report

1.24.23 BOE Meeting

William S. McKersie, Ph.D.

Priority District Updates

Portrait of a Hastings Learner

We are in the process of creating an Action Step Planning Committee. This is a faculty committee. The purpose of this group will be to create concrete, 18-month action steps associated with each of the three goals that the POHL Core Team designed. The Action Step Planning Committee will be facilitated by Judy Wilson on February 8 from 12-3 p.m. and on March 21 from 12-3 p.m. Following the planning process, we will solicit additional feedback from various stakeholders and refine what has been created. Implementation of the action steps will begin in July 2023. We will continue to keep you updated, especially when we turn again to parents, families and students for input and critique. An infographic is also in the works to help the community understand the Portrait and its key components. Stay tuned for more.

Security and Safety Update

I want to reiterate that the top priority of a superintendent in this day and age is the security and safety of our students and employees. I want students, employees and their families to be assured that I am joined in this commitment by all administrators and the BOE. With close guidance from the Hastings Police Department and Altaris, our independent security consultants, we are vigilant in setting, implementing and regularly evaluating security protocols and systems. Training is of the utmost importance, and we appreciate the patience of families in supporting our efforts to make sure students and employees know what to do in an emergency.

Indeed, we will be modifying entry procedures to FMS effective tomorrow (January 25) so that all students will enter through the FMS security entrance. Having a single, closely monitored point of entry to the school matches our procedure at Hillside and HHS, and is aligned with best practice nationally. We also will be reminding students and employees not to open doors for individuals attempting to enter the building through other entrances.

We will keep families informed of other changes to security procedures whenever possible. Please bear in mind that we must, and are allowed to, keep certain procedures private to optimize security and safety for students and employees.

Proposed 2023-24 School Calendar

We are pleased to announce that we will be distributing the *Proposed 2023-24 School Calendar* on February 1, 2023 to employees and families. This is more than one month earlier than scheduled. The BOE will review the proposed calendar over two BOE meetings: February 7 will be the initial review; February 28 will be the final review and vote. Please understand that the proposed calendar will not be final until formally adopted by the BOE on February 28.

HHS Midterms This Week

HHS Students and faculty are focused on midterms this week. Extracurricular activities, including athletics, are on a "voluntary basis" during the midterms, to allow students the full opportunity to focus on their academics. Indeed, Gus Renzin and Elianna Carvalho, the School Board Student Representatives, are taking a pass on tonight's meeting due to midterms. They have submitted their report in writing, however.

Strengthening Partnerships with Hastings Education Foundation

Jackie Saviano, the District's Communications Consultant, has been working closely with the Hastings Education Foundation to discuss how to promote the various programming/grants in action (for the 2022-23 school year), as well as the approval process for next year. The hope is to give community members a behind-the-scenes look at the programming in action, and the benefits that it has for teachers and staff alike. Stay tuned for content to be featured on Hastings UFSD communication channels and HEF's communication channels.

New York State's Master Teacher Program

Recently, Governor Kathy Hochul released the names of New York State's Master Teacher Program cohort and two of Hastings' very own are included in the mix: Robin Farrell, leader of Hillside Elementary School's STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics) program, and Gregory Stephens, Mathematics Department Chairperson for the middle and high schools. The Master Teacher Program is an initiative focused on strengthening STEM fields

in education. It's a vibrant professional network of more than 1,400 outstanding public school K-12 STEM teachers throughout the state who share a passion for their own STEM learning and for collaborating with colleagues to inspire the next generation of STEM leaders. The program's application process is a rigorous one, taking place over the course of several months and culminating in individual presentations and interviews. Each applicant has to demonstrate content and pedagogical knowledge, and a strong commitment to their students and community. Farrell and Stephens will begin this four-year commitment while continuing their regular teaching responsibilities, doing research, developing curriculum, and mentoring. Throughout the year, they will attend weekend workshops at SUNY New Paltz.

Academic Challenge Team Continues Their Winning Streak

Hastings Academic Challenge Team had its third competition of the season on Saturday, January 21 at Horace Greeley High School. The A Team, with a 4-1 record, won their division, adding yet another trophy to our growing collection. They were missing two of their regular members, so this was quite an accomplishment! Stay tuned for more information in an upcoming Hastings Happenings / Superintendent Community Update.

Updates in Athletics

Friday Night Lights in Cochryn Gymnasium are still on a roll. Last week was Staff Appreciation Day at the Boy's Varsity Basketball Game. Staff stopped in to enter in a raffle for Hastings-themed door prizes and to participate in the half-time free-throw contest. Friday Night Lights will continue through February 10 with Alumni Night, Youth Day, & HOH Spirit Day. Refer to the Hastings Weekly for more details. Also, anticipate an upcoming edition of The Buzz with special guest Athletic Director Drew Wendol who will share more about the Hastings Athletics philosophy, do a round-up of accomplishments from student-athletes, coaches, and teams in this first half of the year, and an overview of upcoming events where Hastings Yellowjacket fans can come out to support show their school spirit.

Significant Developments & Upcoming Events

Lunar New Year Recognition

Classrooms are celebrating Lunar New Year, the Year of the Rabbit, which began on Sunday and will last through the next couple of weeks. Stay tuned for more information about some of the programming in the Hastings Happenings and my January 27 Friday Letter.

Other Noteworthy Events/Topics

Please refer to the *Hastings Weekly* for more information on the following:

- FMS Social Dances (5th & 6th on Thursday, 1/26 + 7th & 8th on Friday, 1/27)
- Dimensions of Gender Webinar - A Parent Information Session Presented by the Hillside Gender Team in collaboration with WJCS Center Lane (1/31)
- Senior Peer Leadership Retreat (2/2 + 2/3)
- FMS Grade 6 Musical (2/3 + 2/4)

6. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

A. Report from Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction

Melissa Szymanski, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction

Portrait of a Hastings Learner

We are in the process of finalizing members of the Portrait of a Hastings Learner Action Step Planning Committee. This faculty committee will be facilitated by Judy Wilson. We are working to create a balanced planning committee with representation from across the three buildings. The Action Step Planning Committee will meet on February 8 and March 21.

Hillside Mathematics Committee

The recent work of the Hillside Mathematics Committee focused on exploring and assessing three more mathematics resources. Using the shared vision template the group created to anchor decision-making, members of the committee selected two resources that they would like to see in action. Committee members will be taking field trips to Bedford and Scarsdale in early February to see these resources in action with students.

Putnam Northern Westchester BOCES Learning Session

Jenice Mateo-Toledo, Tesfa Stewart, Jennifer Spirelli, HS Affinity Group Co-President Riya Chandra and I facilitated a learning session for the Putnam Northern Westchester BOCES Curriculum Council last week. Following is the learning session overview:

During this month's session, members of the Hastings team will highlight their evolving journey in the area of DEI. Along with considering the district's journey as well as their own, Council members will have the opportunity to engage in small group conversation in self-selected breakout rooms, and reflect and plan for future DEI efforts.

New York State Education Department Review

Hastings is required to participate in a Targeted Monitoring Review, facilitated by the New York State Education Department. Per a direct conversation with the Hastings reviewer, this is a routine review process. Following is the message Hastings received from the State Education Department:

Each year, Local Education Agencies (LEAs) across New York State are selected by the New York State Education Department's (NYSED) Office of ESSA-Funded Programs for monitoring. This activity ensures that LEAs are able to meet federal requirements, as outlined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

7. BUSINESS

A. Business Items

1. Dr. Diane Goodman and Dr. Ann Marie Garran, Farragut Middle School Racial Development in Adolescence Workshop, proposal.
2. David Lovett LLC, Dance Lighting & Design, lighting design services for Hastings High School Winter Concert, invoice.
3. Merger Letter of Intent, Girls Flag Football.
4. Duke Fisher, Restorative Practices Professional Learning, proposal.
5. The Innocence Project, Racial Equity Day, proposal.
6. Dobbs Ferry School District, contract for Health Services.
7. Westchester Behavior Analysts, proposal for Lunch/Recess Behavior Consultative Support.
8. Approve updated District Responses for year ending June 30, 2022.
9. Xiaojing Chang, Piano Accompaniment Service, Hillside Elementary Chorus, invoice.

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approve the business items.

Motion by Damaris-Lois Lang, second by Jeremy Galland.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Doug Sundheim, Jeremy Galland, Silvia Robles, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Doreen Bucher, Maureen Lennon-Santana

B. Placement and/or Services for CSE and CPSE

CPSE: 12585

CSE: 12023, 10505, 6835, 10542

RESOLVED, that upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools and the Committee on Special Education and the Committee on Preschool Special Education, the Board accepts the classifications and arrangements for the placement and/or services for the 2022-2023 school year.

Motion by Damaris-Lois Lang, second by Silvia Robles.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Doug Sundheim, Jeremy Galland, Silvia Robles, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Doreen Bucher, Maureen Lennon-Santana

8. PERSONNEL

A. Appointments

1. Gerard Marciano, appoint to .8 English Language Arts teacher at Farragut Middle School, MA30, Step 10, \$101,776 (to be pro-rated) effective January 18, 2023-January 27, 2023.
2. Schedule B appointment requests. (Enc)
3. Gordon Macdonald, appoint to Per Diem substitute teacher district-wide effective January 25, 2023 for the 2022-2023 school year.
4. CSEA Auxilliary Personnel, recommendation to appoint the following mentors for the 2022-2023 school year:
Maria Cocucci
Patricia Chibbaro
Joanne Cipollina (2 nurses)
5. Diane Pavone, appoint to position of part-time school monitor, effective January 17, 2023.

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approve the appointments.

Motion by Doug Sundheim, second by Silvia Robles.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Doug Sundheim, Jeremy Galland, Silvia Robles, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Doreen Bucher, Maureen Lennon-Santana

B. Amendment

1. Amend Hastings High School/Farragut Middle School Special Education coverages (internal) to effective date 1/20/23-3/9/23:

Period 1-SS 8 ICT (FMS) Joe Epstein .2 FTE

Period 4-ENG 10 ICT Josh Blum .2 FTE

Period 6-LRC 10 Britney Stampfl .2 FTE

Period 7-ENG 10 ICT Jan Melillo .2 FTE

Period 8-LRC 10 Robyn Royal .2 FTE

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approve the amendments.

Motion by Jeremy Galland, second by Damaris-Lois Lang.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Doug Sundheim, Jeremy Galland, Silvia Robles, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Doreen Bucher, Maureen Lennon-Santana

C. Retirements

1. Josh Blum, English Language Arts teacher at Hastings High School has provided notice of resignation for the purpose of retirement effective June 30, 2023.
2. Christine Geller, Math teacher at Hastings High School has provided notice of resignation for the purpose of retirement effective June 30, 2023.
3. Ava Lambert, Special Education teacher at Hastings High School has provided notice of resignation for the purpose of retirement effective June 30, 2023.

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accept the retirements.

Motion by Silvia Robles, second by Damaris-Lois Lang.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Doug Sundheim, Jeremy Galland, Silvia Robles, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Doreen Bucher, Maureen Lennon-Santana

D. Leaves of Absence

1. Janice Bochicchio, Reading teacher at Hillside Elementary School has requested a leave of absence as follows: FMLA with pay January 9, 2023-January 20, 2023. She returned to work on January 23, 2023.
2. Scott Shapiro, English Language Arts teacher at Farragut Middle School has requested a leave of absence as follows: FMLA with pay December 15, 2022-January 27, 2023. He will return to work on January 30, 2023.
3. Janet Lyons, Special Education teacher at Hastings High School has requested a leave of absence as follows: FMLA with pay January 20, 2023-March 9, 2023. She will return to work on March 10, 2023.
4. John Buchanan, Social Studies teacher at Hastings High School has requested a leave of absence as follows: FMLA with pay January 20, 2023-January 26, 2023. FMLA without pay January 27, 2023-February 9, 2023. He will return to work on February 10, 2023.

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approve the following leaves of absence.

Motion by Silvia Robles, second by Doug Sundheim.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Doug Sundheim, Jeremy Galland, Silvia Robles, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Doreen Bucher, Maureen Lennon-Santana

9. MINUTES

A. Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of January 10, 2023.

RESOLVED that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of January 10, 2023.

Motion by Silvia Robles, second by Jeremy Galland.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Doug Sundheim, Jeremy Galland, Silvia Robles, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Doreen Bucher, Maureen Lennon-Santana

10. POLICIES

A. First Read

Policy presented for First Read:

- Policy No. 4531 - Field Trips and Excursions

Melissa Szymanski gave the Board an overview of the updates/revisions made to the policy which has been revised to include excursions and international travel. Staff in the World Language Department are interested in bringing back international travel which prompted a need to create a more robust policy.

11. NEW BUSINESS

A. Renaming of Facilities

Dr. McKersie gave the Board a brief overview of the proposal to rename the walkway to Reynolds Field the Ali Marpet Walkway. This was brought forth by the Village and village trustees. From the District and Administration standpoint, they are supportive of the proposal. Maureen explained that should the Board decide to move forward and vote on the renaming the Hastings Booster club would like to partner with us for signage. Will be brought forward for a formal vote at the next meeting.

B. Unused Inclement Weather Days 2022-2023

Dr. McKersie reviewed the Proposed Give-Back Days 2022-2023 Memo, noting this is a contractual obligation. Reviewed the process and reasons for selecting the give back days.

- Dr. Lang inquired about instructional hours.
- Jeremy Galland would like to know if other area districts are giving back all days.
- Doreen Bucher asked if this was in the contract, she thought it was only to be done last year due to a COVID year.

Item will be brought back at February 7th meeting for discussion. The administration will provide a copy of the MOA, samples of what other districts are doing, and historical averages per year, the Board will not vote until February 28th.

[Click here to view the memo](#)

[Click here to view the video of the discussion](#)

12. SECOND PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Second Public Comment

- No public comment

13. AGENDA REVIEW

A. Agenda Review

Dr. McKersie reviewed the upcoming topics for our February BOE Meetings:

February 7th:

- Detailed Budget Presentation
- Revisit Give Back Days Discussion
- First Read of District Calendar

February 28th:

- 2nd Read of the Calendar
- State of the District Mid-Year Update

14. BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENTS

A. Comments

Doreen Bucher:

- Commented on the 5th and 6th Grade concert. It was incredible, there were so many people there and it is the biggest band they ever had. Thanked Mr. Riss, Mr. Carini, Mr. Rubino and Mr. Day.
- Mentioned Kronk which is playing next Friday and Saturday night.

Dr. Lang:

- Hillside March 9th & 10 - Lion King her son will be in it.

Maureen Lennon Santana:

- One Acts was excellent.
- On a more somber note, expressed her sympathies to Laura Ritch who lost her husband.

15. ADJOURNMENT

A. Adjournment

1. Meeting adjourned at 9:41 PM.

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion by Jeremy Galland, second by Damaris-Lois Lang.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Doug Sundheim, Jeremy Galland, Silvia Robles, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Doreen Bucher, Maureen Lennon-Santana

Melissa DeLaBarrera

Submitted by:

Melissa DeLaBarrera

District Clerk