



**Hastings-on-Hudson  
Regular Board of Education Meeting  
Tuesday, October 12, 2021**

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**Members present**

Doug Sundheim  
Jeremy Galland  
Silvia Robles  
Alison Andrus  
Alexander Dal Piaz  
Damaris-Lois Lang  
Doreen Bucher

Meeting called to order at 7:32 PM

**1. OPENING OF MEETING**

A. Call to Order

- Meeting called to order at 7:32 PM by Doug Sundheim, President

**2. PRESENTATIONS**

Presented by Susan M. Barossi, Partner  
PKF O'Connor Davies, Accountants and Advisors

[Click here to view presentation](#)

**3. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT**

A. Covid-19 Update

- Testing shortage - quad village Superintendents being asked to think differently around the required tests for students.
- Numbers are very good in Westchester County, September daily cases down from 200 per day to 100 per day on a 7-day average, positivity rate has gone down from 3% down to 1%.
- Vaccination rates are very high - over 80% of eligible individuals are fully vaccinated in the County.
- Surveillance testing across the district has had zero positive cases so far.
- A total of 4 students have tested positive this year, resulting in 12 quarantines.
- Staff total of 4 (2 before school started) and no quarantines.
- Students doing a great job with wearing masks.

B. District Highlights

- This weekend 1 of 2 productions of The Complete Works of William Shakespeare Abridged, wonderful show, showcasing incredible talent.
- 5th graders decorated the sidewalk outside with positive messaging for National Bullying prevention month.
- Athletic teams have rallied for Compete to Beat Cancer as a way to raise money to fight cancer.
- Homecoming weekend is coming up, this Friday is the high school pep rally from 2-3 pm.
- Homecoming matches and games start Friday and carry through to Saturday.

### C. Communication Plan and Survey Update

- Communications Workgroup is working on a communication plan which the full board will see soon, focusing on content strategic objectives.
- The plan is on hold while we get a survey out, the survey has been piloted with the workgroup, PSAT, SEPTA leaders as well as some staff, revisions are being made based on their feedback.
- Working on a communication protocol - who to call when with a question.
- Fi Goodman, Jason Platzner, and Chris Yerkes working on modifications to the communication protocol prior to adding it to the website.

## 4. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

### A. Report from Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction

Melissa Szymanski:

- Preparing for Our Tri-State Visit  
Lou Adipietro, Jennifer Spirelli, Amy Cazes, Tesfa Stewart, and I attended a Tri-State visit preparation workshop hosted by the Tri-State Consortium. We learned together about the necessary action steps associated with a Tri-State visit, which include finalizing the focus of the visit, forming a steering committee, determining essential questions, reviewing indicators, establishing a timeline for preparation, preparing logistics, and designing a district presentation to frame the essential questions. Our intention is to finalize the essential questions that will ground our visit immediately following our October Chair Council meeting.
- Diagnostic Screening: Social Emotional Learning (SEL)  
Jeanette Kocur and I have been working with our internal technology staff, data coordinator, and a consultant from Panorama Education to prepare for rostering students for the social-emotional learning screener and to explore implementation resources to support teachers to administer the survey to students, including a guide to activate accommodations such as text to speech. We are waiting for Panorama to sign our paperwork in order to move forward with the rostering process. We continue to anticipate administering the screener at the end of October.
- Diagnostic Screening: Academic (STAR Renaissance)  
We are at the conclusion of our first academic screening period and have begun moving into internal data analysis. Training on data analysis will be provided to middle school teachers on 10/19 and elementary school teachers on 10/21. Data from the academic screening process will be used as one data point to inform classroom intervention and enrichment opportunities and, as applicable, referral to the building level multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) team. Once the internal analysis has been completed, score reports will be shared with parents.
- K-12 Mathematics Committee  
The K-12 Mathematics Committee has begun meeting again. Focus areas for our first session included setting the purpose for the work of the group over the current school year and continuing with the rubric development that began during the spring of 2021. The committee has committed to finalizing the rubric, creating shared definitions for potentially ambiguous terminology included in the rubric, and designing job-embedded learning opportunities for members of the mathematics faculty. Lesson study, which will involve teachers designing, analyzing, and refining lessons together will be key to this embedded work.
- Congratulations to the Hastings High School cast and crew of The Complete Works of William Shakespeare Abridged. The talent and collaborative efforts of our students were able to shine through, even in spite of some raindrops early in the weekend. Thank you to Gerard Marciano, Rachel Wineberg and Gillian Husovsky for all of their efforts to direct and produce this show.

### B. Report from Business Official

Maureen Caraballo:

- Capital Project  
Work is still on schedule and on budget. The last of our projects MS Auditorium is underway. On Hillside most of the work over the next few months will be internal construction of the building. The

music suite looks wonderful, November 1st is the goal to open the space.

- Safety

For the last few years, the District has partnered with the PTSA and leadership from Hastings on Hudson Village including police and fire to look for ways to improve safety around the school including safe walking routes. The drop-off spots in front of the building were implemented as a result of this group. This year we will be finally adding crossing guards to a few more key areas around the school. There have been four additional crosswalks that the committee after a thorough analysis has determined are areas that need to be covered. In the next week or so we will have at least two of the crosswalks covered. The first being the corner of Mount Hope and Farragut and the other being Mount Hope and Rosedale. The committee is also working on areas for designated bus drop-offs for athletic buses that tend to be parked in fire zones creating traffic issues in the afternoon. Other topics being discussed include the possibility of having School Street changed into a one way, exploring the impact of the proposed bike lane on parking at the school. Exploring additional parking at school buildings to lessen cars parked on roads leading to the school.

- Transportation

Transportation remains to be a top priority for us. Thankfully, each week it is getting a bit better. There still are a few private and In-District runs that need to be corrected. Some of our Out of District private schools will not be able to be addressed fully until more drivers are onboarded. Currently, we have no substitute drivers available if one of the drivers calls out. It is a top priority to fill these slots before we start having absences.

- Finance

As we prepare to begin our budget work for the upcoming school year, there has been some positive information that we have received from the NYS Comptroller. In a recent update, it was reported that there will be a reduction in the employer contribution rate for the Employees' Retirement System. The adjusted rates will impact payments next State Fiscal Year 2022-23. The current average rate for this fiscal year was 16.2%. This will drop to 11.6% for the upcoming budget cycle. In addition, DiNapoli lowered the long-term assumed rate of return on the Fund's investments from 6.8% to 5.9%. The rate for the NYS Teachers retirement system will also be lowered due to better than expected investment returns. Both systems use a multi-year average to calculate the rate. This is welcome news as we look at our upcoming budget. This reduction will decrease our current retirement expenses by approximately \$350k.

## **5. STUDENT REPORT**

### **A. Student Report**

The following report was read on behalf of Sabine Hinkaty and Guz Renzin who could not attend the meeting:

Good evening everyone! Gus and I are both unavailable to do our report in person tonight, but we have a report ready nonetheless. We hope everyone watching tonight has a fun Homecoming week! Speaking of Homecoming, today was the first day of spirit week, and many students fashioned their best pajamas for pajama day. We are excited to see who goes "all-out" for Twin Day, Jersey Day, and Green and Gold Day the rest of the week.

High School Students will all attend this year's Pep Rally at 2 pm on Friday afternoon. It will take place at Reynolds Field instead of the Cochran Gym, its usual location. Senior MCs Ella Campbell and Wyatt Lecky have many fun activities planned to get everyone hype for all upcoming Homecoming festivities.

The Student Union has also created a competition between the sports teams. The team that hangs up the most posters around the school before Friday's pep rally will win a prize!

Now for the Homecoming games! Boys Soccer kicks off the weekend on Friday with a 4:30pm game against rival Dobbs Ferry. The rest of the games are on Saturday: Field Hockey at 10:00am, Girls Soccer at 11:00am, and finally football at 1:30pm. Many student clubs and organizations will have booths at the football game. The pep band will also be playing for the first time in two years!

Girls Soccer had an exciting under the lights game on Friday that resulted in a 6-0 win over Dobbs Ferry! Even though it was Dobbs' Homecoming and Senior Game, many Hastings fans showed up and

made their presence known. The energy was amazing and many players and fans agreed that night games, especially on Friday nights, would be a great way to bring the student body and community together in the future. Girls Soccer's record advanced to 8-3 with the win.

Project SHARE's thanksgiving won't be held in the Cochran gym this year due to COVID restrictions but the student board is hard at work planning a dinner on wheels that as many students as possible will be able to take part in.

Juniors are taking the PSAT tomorrow morning, which means stress levels are high.

Football also had an exciting home win on Saturday against Rye Neck.

## **6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

### A. Public Comment

- No Public Comment

## **7. BUSINESS**

### A. Business Items

1. Impartial Hearing Officer, appointment for case #560902.
2. Impartial Hearing Officer, appointment for case #560529.
3. Stipulation of Settlement.
4. Pleasantville Union Free School District, contract.
5. Amanda Mueller, Physical Therapy Services, contract.
6. Jenny Wallack, Teacher of the Hearing Impaired, contract.
7. EZ Designs LLC, invoice in the amount of \$700.00 for construction of HS Musical Set.
8. Stipulation of Settlement.
9. Warrants.
10. HHS Alumni Association, donation of a framed print of the Jasper Cropsey painting entitled, "Autumn on the Hudson".
11. Budget transfer.
12. Stipulation of Settlement.
13. PNW BOCES, Bilingual School Psychologist, contract.
14. Milburn Flooring Proposal.
15. Warrants.
16. Approve Audit Report for year ending June 30, 2021 and District Responses.

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

Motion by Alexander Dal Piaz, second by Silvia Robles.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Doug Sundheim, Jeremy Galland, Silvia Robles, Alison Andrus, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Doreen Bucher

### B. Placement and/or Services for CSE and CPSE

RESOLVED, that upon recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools and the Committee on Special Education, the Board accepts the classifications and arrangements for the placement and/or services for the 2021-2022 school year:

CSE: 10972, 10196, 11895, 10160, 11413, 10464, 7717, 7262, 11511, 11876, 12283, 12282

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

Motion by Silvia Robles, second by Doreen Bucher.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Doug Sundheim, Jeremy Galland, Silvia Robles, Alison Andrus, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Doreen Bucher

## 8. PERSONNEL

### A. Appointments

1. Charles Ntumba, appoint to position of School Monitor, effective October 12, 2021.
2. Erik Addison, appoint to part-time position of School Monitor, effective October 13, 2021.
3. Daina Naydenova, appoint to part-time position of School Monitor, pending fingerprint clearance.
4. Yanilka Rivas, appoint to part-time position of School Monitor, effective October 13, 2021.
5. Updated returning previously appointed Substitute list.
6. Updated Schedule B appointment request as per attached spreadsheet.
7. Tyler McDonald, student at SUNY Cortland has requested Observation Hours in support of his teacher preparation program, from January 10, 2022-January 14, 2022.

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

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

Motion by Silvia Robles, second by Doreen Bucher.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Doug Sundheim, Jeremy Galland, Silvia Robles, Alison Andrus, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Doreen Bucher

### B. Amendments

1. Josh Guzman, school monitor, last day worked September 3, 2021, amended to promotional appointment of Permanent Building Substitute.
2. Benjamin Glassman, English Regular Substitute/Leave Replacement at Hastings High School has extended his appointment to cover a leave of absence as follows: August 30, 2021-December 1, 2021.
3. Amend the following Special Education teachers at Farragut Middle School to an additional .2 FTE assignment until the end of the 2021-2022 school year: Gina Bellavia, Joseph Epstein, Caryn Hecht, Seanna O'Donnell, Britney Skultety.

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

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

Motion by Silvia Robles, second by Doreen Bucher.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Doug Sundheim, Jeremy Galland, Silvia Robles, Alison Andrus, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Doreen Bucher

### C. Resignations

1. Regina Azzara, School Monitor, resignation effective September 1, 2021.
2. Amy Abrusci, School Monitor, resignation, last day worked October 4, 2021.
3. Yesenia Quinones, School Monitor, resignation, last day worked September 29, 2021.
4. Elizabeth Paquette, School Monitor, resignation, last day worked October 7, 2020.
5. Raquisha Simmons, School Monitor, resignation, last day worked February 12, 2021.

Resolution: RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accept the resignations.

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

Motion by Silvia Robles, second by Doreen Bucher.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Doug Sundheim, Jeremy Galland, Silvia Robles, Alison Andrus, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Doreen Bucher

#### D. Leaves of Absence

1. Laurence Cerretani, Special Education teacher at Farragut Middle School has requested a leave of absence as follows: NYSCPSL September 30, 2021. He returned to work on October 1, 2021.
2. Jamie Nedwick, Media Specialist at Hillside Elementary School has requested a leave of absence as follows: NYSCPSL September 13, 2021-September 24, 2021. She returned to work on September 27, 2021.
3. Raquel Reid-McFarlane, Teacher Assistant at Farragut Middle School has amended her leave of absence as follows: FMLA with pay August 30, 2021-October 18, 2021. FMLA without pay October 19, 2021-November 19, 2021, unpaid Medical leave of absence November 22, 2021-March 24, 2022. She will return to work on March 25, 2022.
4. Maria Rudolph, English teacher at Hastings High School has amended her leave of absence as follows: FMLA without pay July 26, 2021-August 27, 2021, FMLA with pay August 30, 2021-October 15, 2021, Leave of absence with pay October 18, 2021-October 25, 2021, unpaid Parental leave of absence October 26, 2021-November 30, 2021. She will return to work on December 1, 2021.

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

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

Motion by Silvia Robles, second by Doreen Bucher.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Doug Sundheim, Jeremy Galland, Silvia Robles, Alison Andrus, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Doreen Bucher

## 9. MINUTES

### A. Approval of Minutes

- Approval of Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 27, 2021.

RESOLVED that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 27, 2021.

Motion by Alison Andrus, second by Alexander Dal Piaz.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Doug Sundheim, Jeremy Galland, Silvia Robles, Alison Andrus, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Doreen Bucher

## 10. OLD BUSINESS

### A. BOE Meeting Topics 2021-2022

Dr. McKersie reviewed the most recent updates on the BOE Meeting Topics spreadsheet:

- November 22nd - Update on SEL and Learning Impact of COVID-19
- December 6th - DEI Update
- May 23rd - added Class of 2022 Future Steps - what do we know about where they are and where they are headed
- Vote by the end of March on school year calendar

## 11. SECOND PUBLIC COMMENT

### A. Second Public Comment

- No Public Comment

## 12. BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENTS

### A. Comments

Allison Andrus:

- Regarding the document shared for the Goals as a Leadership team, appreciates the updates from Dr. McKersie. Communication is moving along in the feedback from surveys and the social emotional. Appreciates the organization and the efforts.

Dr. Lang:

- Thanked for the listening ear. Feels that how what is communicated is heard and addressed and expressed appreciation.

Alexander Dalpiaz:

- As if with the K-12 Math Committee is there an ongoing discussion about the course progression?
- Melissa Szymanski explained that has begun with the leadership team with intention of bringing other voices in. Course progression is complex, flexible pathways have been a key focus.

Doreen Bucher:

- Asked Melissa Szymanski if we ever get feedback from Alumni on what they wish they had learned as a student?
- Melissa Szymanski to follow up with Jeanette Kocur to see if there is any feedback.

Jeremy Galland:

- Thanked Maureen and the finance department for the audit report and thanked Andrew Wendol, Athletic Director for the diverse sports being played this weekend.

## 13. ADJOURNMENT

### A. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion by Alison Andrus, second by Damaris-Lois Lang.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Doug Sundheim, Jeremy Galland, Silvia Robles, Alison Andrus, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Doreen Bucher

*Melissa DeLaBarrera*

**Submitted by:  
Melissa DeLaBarrera  
District Clerk**