



**Hastings-on-Hudson
Regular Board of Education Meeting
Monday, September 27, 2021**

Members present

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

1. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Public Hearing on District Code of Conduct

- Public Hearing to hear input on the changes to Policy #5300 District Code of Conduct.

Dorothy Heagle - Hastings Resident/Parent of 5th Grader:

- Commented on language used in the Dress code portion of the District Code of Conduct refers to "a student's dress, grooming and appearance, including hairstyle/color, jewelry, make-up and nails". Language should be more inclusive taking into account non-binary students, gender expression and cultural diversity.
- Suggested obtaining student input in the revision and update to dress code language.

2. OPENING OF MEETING

A. Call to Order

- Meeting called to order at 7:22 PM by Doug Sundheim, President

3. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT

A. District Highlights

Dr. McKersie:

- Highlighted the great work that is happening in the District and the following four accomplishments:
 - Hastings High School Senior, William Muller, was named a tenor alternate for the 2021 New York State School Music Association All-State in December.
 - Hastings High School Seniors Alexander Arditi, Charles Linder, and Bluebell Ward were named National Merit Scholarship semifinalists.
 - Hillside Elementary School held its first assembly today where they reviewed both the Code of Conduct and Hillside Core Values.
 - Three students were honored for College Board National Hispanic Recognition programs based on their remarkable academic achievements and their outstanding performance on the PSAT and in AP: Felipe Iglesias, Manuel Iglesias, and Max Mazer.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

A. Report from Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction

Melissa Szymanski:

- Social Emotional Learning (SEL).

- o As referenced in Dr. McKersie's recent letter to the community, Jeanette Kocur, Director of School Counseling, and I have now finalized the Panorama SEL diagnostic screeners in partnership with the building leaders for Grades K-12. This screener will be confidential but not anonymous, so student support can occur if necessary. Some of the key domains that will be investigated are student competency and wellbeing and student supports and environment. Sub topics that have been identified include (a) challenging feelings, (b) emotion regulation, (c) positive feelings, (d) self-efficacy, (e) self-management, and (f) supportive relationships. It will be administered at the end of October, once students have settled in. More information will follow later this week, including links to the questions that will be asked of students.
- New Professionals' Meeting
 - o As part of our induction process, new professionals are invited to meet monthly with mentor coordinator, Jill Ochacher. The September meeting took place last week. Focus areas for discussion at the first meeting included how the transition to the district was going, identifying areas of need, additional training on Frontline, the application used for professional learning and absence management, and preparation for parent/teacher conferences.
- Chair Council
 - o Last week, members of the Chair Council came together for our first meeting of the school year. Discussion centered around identifying an area of focus for our March 9-11 Tri-State Consortium visit to the district. Presently, the team is interested in having this regional group of critical friends support our inquiry around collaboration within the system in service to organizational success. Teachers, administrators, and I are currently working together to identify and refine questions that will anchor the Hastings visit. Our hope is to gain critical insight that will inform our ability to strengthen collaboration across stakeholders to promote a shared vision and systemic coherence.
- Culturally Responsive Pedagogies
 - o Over the summer, a team of teachers worked together to identify resources celebrating Hispanic heritage. These resources were recently shared with the broader faculty. While the resource share was timed with the start of Hispanic Heritage Month, faculty were encouraged to use the resources throughout the year in service to culturally responsive practice.
- Congratulations to William Muller, Hastings High School Senior, who has been selected as tenor alternate in the 2021 New York State School Music Association All-State.
- Congratulations to our three Hastings High School students who have been named as National Merit Scholarship semifinalists: Alexander Arditi, Charles Linder, and Bluebell Ward.

B. Report from Business Official

Maureen Caraballo:

- Transportation Update
 - o Transportation continues to be a tremendous challenge for us. Although, there have been some routes that have been corrected. There are still many that need to be addressed. The driver shortage is still a major factor but it is further complicated by the routes that are not as efficient as they could be. Ardsley has brought in outside consultants to help work through these. Unfortunately this is going to take some time. There has been a google sheet created by Ardsley that will be used to track all the issues by District and will help further guide and prioritize the work that needs to be done. Although it is not helping us now, our new Governor is working on lessening the burden of onboarding drivers.
 - o Starting this week, we will be using the HS as a hub for some of our OOD students to be picked up from instead of their homes. This is an idea we have spoken about for years in the Quad that will make the routes more efficient and timely. All the other Districts with students on this bus will also be picked up at their respective schools. This is a bus going to private schools in Riverdale. This will allow us to get the students there on time and will also be a model we may look at for other routes.
 - o Our In District routes are still being worked on. Unfortunately some parents were notified today by their drivers that their pickup times and drop offs were going to change effective tomorrow. I was notified by a parent and immediately called transportation as this was not something that I was aware of. I directed them to not make these proposed changes prior to a full review being done. I only want to make sure siblings and children without transportation are being addressed.
- Reynolds Field Update
 - o Joe and I have worked closely with our Village counterpart to address the cleaning and reopening of the park. It was mutually agreed that the District would handle the cleanup and file the restoration under our insurance. Our grounds team has been out cleaning up where they can. The work to remove the contaminated materials will begin on Wednesday. The park will reopen to children in a week or so.
 - o We have received a proposal from a contractor to submit to our insurance on what they estimate the repairs to Reynolds will cost. The quote includes a rebuild to the Culvert drain as well as riff raffing the areas leading into the drain, a restoration of the drainage and top coat of the track, rebuilding the retaining wall, fixing the walkways and other site deterioration. Resurfacing of tennis and basketball courts. The total estimated cost is close to half a million dollars. We have submitted the information to the adjustor and will

await his feedback. The first and most important repair will be the rebuild of the culvert, retaining walls and sidewalks.

- Construction Update

- The Hillside project is moving along schedule. As some of you may have seen there is a shut-off valve that has been placed at the entryway of Hillside. The placement of this box really was dictated by a number of factors including the proximity to the utilities at the street, existing utilities and cost. The other option would have been to place it on the opposite side of the driveway and would have required removal of some trees and would have cost approximately \$30k more due to ripping out the roadway and existing sidewalks.
- The project has been moving along nicely with the anticipated completion date in late February, early March.
- The HS Music Suite will have their new flooring installed next week. To date the rooms have been reconfigured, new soundproof acoustical ceiling has been installed, new lighting and electrical through the space has also been completed. The last item we are waiting on is the custom storage that should be here at the end of October. The space will be reopened for students in November.
- The MS auditorium project is underway. Our three contractors are working on submittals and are beginning to mobilize. We are super excited to see this wonderful space finally receive the renovations needed to bring it back to life for our students and faculty.

- COVID testing

- Covid testing for our non vaccinated staff will begin this week. This will be performed by our in-house nurses. The surveillance testing program is scheduled to begin either late this week or early next week. We are working with our partner Quadrant to make sure we have enough staff and students signed up to begin the process. We hope to get some additional participation to increase our sample size.

Jeremy Galland:

- Commented regarding the surveillance testing. Random testing of asymptomatic students can result in false positives, resulting in unnecessary quarantines.

Dr. Lang:

- Asked for clarification on transportation update.
- Inquired if there ever been a town hall conversation about COVID, where we invite experts to discuss with students and community. Guz Renzin noted that a COVID forum might cause more stress for students.

5. STUDENT REPORT

A. Student Report

Sabine Hinkaty:

- Girls soccer dominated in 2 games last week advancing their record to 5 and 1.
- Boys soccer won 2-0 today against Albertus Magnus.
- High School Band is preparing for their performances at two upcoming football games this October.
- Student Union working on plans for homecoming; they are also changing the formatting of their meetings.
- As October approaches Seniors are bombarded with college applications on top of schoolwork and after-school activities.

Gus Renzin:

- Girls cross country won the Fred Gressler Invitational at White Plains High School: Caitlin Thomas came in 2nd place overall.
- Hastings Junior Vivian Smith is to up for the LOHUD Field Hockey Player of the Week.
- Work has begun on the first edition of the Buzzer for the school year, managing editors have begun to meet with new writers.
- The Cast of Hastings Production of The Complete Works of Williams Shakespeare Abridged working hard on rehearsals .
- Varsity football vs Dobbs called off Friday night after 1st quarter because lights went off at Springhurst.
- Signs ups for the PSAT are up for Juniors.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Public Comment

- No Public Comment

7. BUSINESS

A. Business Items

1. Be it resolved, that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education approves to increase the balance of the Retirement Reserve Fund, in amount not to exceed \$50,000.

2. Extended School Year Services for Summer 2021.
3. Warrants.
4. Expenditure and Revenue Reports for August 2021.
5. Appointments to CPSE and CSE Committees.
6. Isa Marrs Speech Language Pathology, PC, contract.
7. Healy Electric Contracting, Inc., Contract E for Auditorium Renovations at Farragut Middle School.
8. W.J. Northridge Construction Corp., Contract G for Auditorium Renovations at Farragut Middle School.
9. S & O Construction Services, Inc., Contract M for Auditorium Renovations at Farragut Middle School.
10. Playground Maintenance Corp., Reynolds Field Playground Surfacing Renovation, contract

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

Motion by Silvia Robles, second by Alexander Dal Piaz.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

B. Placement and/or Services for CSE and CPSE

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 2021-2022 school year:

CSE: 10972, 11522, 12294, 11899

CPSE: 12261

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 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

8. PERSONNEL

A. Appointments

1. Updated Returning Substitute list as per attached spreadsheet.
2. Updated Schedule B appointment request as per attached spreadsheet.
3. Emily L. Cartwright, appoint to part time position of School Monitor, effective September 21, 2021.
4. Colleen Jones, appoint to 1.0 FTE probationary Special Education teacher at Hillside Elementary School, MA, Step 1, \$65,574 effective October 1, 2021. Probationary period October 1, 2021-September 30, 2025. Tenure date: October 1, 2025. Certifications held: Students with Disabilities (Grades 1-6)-Initial, Literacy (Birth-Grade 6)-Initial, Early Childhood Education (Birth-Grade 2), Childhood Education (Grades 1-6)-Initial.

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 Alexander Dal Piaz, second by Damaris-Lois Lang.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

B. Retirements

1. Lois Vigada, Teacher Assistant, resignation for retirement purposes effective August 30, 2021.

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

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

Motion by Alexander Dal Piaz, second by Damaris-Lois Lang.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

C. Resignations

1. Gabrielle Sokol, Special Education teacher at Hillside Elementary School has provided notice of resignation effective August 26, 2021.
2. Jeanette McCaughey, incoming Speech and Language Pathologist at Farragut Middle School/Hastings High School has provided notice of resignation effective September 27, 2021.
3. Marie Fitzgerald, School Monitor, resignation, last day worked June 25, 2020.
4. Lucero Castillo, School Monitor, resignation, last day worked June 25, 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 Alexander Dal Piaz, second by Damaris-Lois Lang.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

D. Leaves of Absence

1. Carlos Castaneda, Custodian district-wide, has requested a leave of absence as follows: FMLA with pay August 30, 2021-October 25, 2021. He will return to work on October 26, 2021.
2. Antoinette DeSouza, Teacher Assistant at Hillside Elementary School has requested a leave of absence as follows: FMLA with pay September 15, 2021-November 9, 2021, FMLA without pay November 10, 2021-December 7, 2021. She will return to work on December 8, 2021.
3. Raquel Reid-McFarlane, Teacher Assistant at Farragut Middle School has requested a leave of absence as follows: FMLA with pay August 30, 2021-October 6, 2021. She will return to work on October 7, 2021.
4. Romeo Spiniello, Home and Career teacher at Farragut Middle School has requested a leave of absence as follows: NYPSL September 9, 2021-September 13, 2021. He returned to work on September 14, 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 Alexander Dal Piaz, second by Damaris-Lois Lang.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

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

9. MINUTES

A. Approval of Minutes

- Approval of Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 13, 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 13, 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

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Policy

Policy Committee Report:

Alexander DalPiaz:

- Gave a brief overview of the Policy Committee's initial meeting with District Counsel, Susanne Volpe during which they discussed the Policy Audit process driven by NYSBBA (New York School Board Association). It will be about a two year process to review all the required/suggested policies. The plan is to review approximately six policies at each meeting, addressing the ones that need updating first. Once there is a draft or a redline of a sample or existing policy it moves to the policy committee to discuss, then will pass to the board for full discussion and then a vote.

11. NEW BUSINESS

A. Policy #5300: District Code of Conduct - First Read

- First Read:
 - Policy #5300 District Code of Conduct.
- Based on Public Hearing comments and further discussion it was decided that the policy requires some updating and review by our District counsel regarding language. It will be presented again at a future meeting for discussion and vote.

12. SECOND PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Second Public Comment

- No public comment.

13. BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENTS

A. Comments

Jeremy Galland:

- Asked about the process for amending the District Code of Conduct based on an email received from a community member and a public comment made during the public hearing. Will that cause for another first read.

Dr. McKersie:

- Noted that comments will be run by counsel and any adjustments may push us into another first read.

Silvia Robles:

- Commented on the updates to the Code of Conduct - noticed the only changes to be the new designations of DASA officers.

Doug Sundheim:

- Significant changes, will make the adjustments and post again for a second first read.

Dr. Lang:

- Commented on community concern for DASA and the need to looking at that more closely.

Alexander DalPiaz:

- Question regarding storm damage and insurance coverage.

Jeremy Galland:

- Leadership team has given our district a great start to the year. Feels for the students it's been a successful September, expressed his gratitude for the staff.

14. ADJOURNMENT

A. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

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

Final Resolution: Motion Failed

Not Present at Vote: Doug Sundheim, Jeremy Galland, Silvia Robles, Alison Andrus, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang

Melissa DeLaBarrera

Submitted by:

Melissa DeLaBarrera

District Clerk