



**Hastings-on-Hudson  
Regular Board of Education Meeting  
Wednesday, September 27, 2023**

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**Members present**

Silvia Robles  
Alexander Dal Piaz  
Damaris-Lois Lang  
Maureen Lennon-Santana  
Jodie Meyer  
Theresa McCaffrey

**1. PUBLIC HEARING**

A. [Public Hearing on District Code of Conduct](#)

- Public Hearing to hear input on changes to Policy #5300 District Code of Conduct.
  - No public comment

**2. OPENING OF MEETING**

A. [Call to Order](#)

- Meeting called to order at 6:06 p.m. by Alex Dal Piaz

**3. POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT**

A. [Policy Committee Report](#)

- Melissa Szymanski reported that the policy committee had a Policy Committee Orientation with Suzanne Volpe, Esq. from Keane and Beane. The committee is comprised of three trustees: Dr. Lang, Theresa McCaffrey, and Maureen Lennon-Santana.

**4. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT**

A. [Update & District Highlights](#)

- Melissa Szymanski reported that there were suggestions to enhance the superintendent's report. The main takeaway was to incorporate more positive news and updates from the three schools and various departments, aiming to provide a more comprehensive and robust report. Melissa expressed gratitude to Jackie for her assistance in this effort, as well as to others involved.

[Click here to view the Superintendent Report](#)

**5. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

A. [Report from Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum and Instruction](#)

Presented by Melissa Szymanski, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction

APPR

This year, Districts are required to report principals' and teachers' evaluation scores to the New York State Education Department. Melissa has been working closely with Adriana Beaudreault, Data Coordinator, and Nick Macri to finalize score calculations and prepare the file to the State.

Melissa worked collaboratively with Lou Adipietro and Nate Morgan to negotiate a new APPR plan, as required by the State. We submitted a new plan, based on the collectively negotiated agreements. Hastings received a

recent notification that our submission was approved. The new plan will be posted to the website and may be found in its entirety [here](#).

### Number Worlds

Since last spring, we have been exploring Number Worlds as a potential mathematics intervention resource to support students receiving tiered intervention support. Melissa Szymanski, Amy Cazes, Scott Wynne, and both mathematics interventionists (HES and FMS), support a pilot of this resource for the 23-24 school year. We are particularly delighted by the problem-based learning component, which is aligned with our authentic learning goal associated with POHL. A proposal for Number Worlds is on the BOE agenda. Please note that grant funding will be used for this purchase.

### DASA Coordinator Training

All three building-level DASA coordinators (Mike LaRocco, Kamillah Dawkins, and Melissa Hardesty), and the district-level DASA coordinator (Melissa Szymanski), participated together in DASA Coordinator training as an ongoing refresher. They met last week to debrief and review protocols.

### Computer-Based Testing

The State is requiring computer-based testing in Grades 5 and 8 this year. Melissa Szymanski, Maureen Caraballo, Scott Wynne, Kamillah Dawkins, and Adriana Beaudrealt met together with members of our technology team to review IT requirements and finalize implementation steps that need to occur prior to testing dates. Melissa and Scott are in the process of developing a communication plan for additional notification to families.

### Facing History

Melissa Szymanski and Jenice Mateo-Toledo had a preliminary meeting with Facing History to discuss professional learning for middle school humanities and special education teachers. This work will be a replication of the Teaching for Equity and Justice program, which was provided to high school teachers last year as a result of a generous HEF grant. HEF has agreed to fund this year's work at the middle school level, as well.

### Chair Council

The September Chair Council meeting focused on the rise of AI, specifically ChatGPT. While this application is currently blocked, the Chair Council, including administrators, unanimously supports unblocking it. The department chairs and key administrators are in the process of developing a position statement and designing professional learning for the full faculty. These sessions will occur during faculty meetings in October (HHS), November (FMS), and January (HES).

### Professional Learning Committee

Members of the professional learning committee worked together to design a Superintendent's Conference Day feedback survey, which will be shared with the faculty next week. Feedback that is collected will serve to inform the design of future Superintendent's Conference Day agendas.

- Melissa also mentioned that a learning session was held for the community, focusing on the Clarks and Brown v. the Board of Ed. Nick Murray, the division manager of the Brown v. the Board of Ed National Historic Park, facilitated the event, customizing it to highlight the Clarks and their impact on the landmark court case. The event included a Q&A session. The video and a transcript will be posted on the website. This was the first event in a series for the Clark Commemoration Project, and it received positive feedback from those who attended. Additionally, an art installation at the high school lobby was mentioned, which is part of the project and will eventually move to the Hastings Historical Society.
- Dr. Lang expressed appreciation for the initiative and student involvement, emphasizing the genuine commitment to positive change. Jodie Meyer highlighted Hastings' historical significance as a hub for black families during the time of the Clarks.

## **6. STUDENT REPORT**

### A. [Student Report](#)

Kai Dirksen:

- Updates from the middle and elementary schools:
  - Hillside had a back-to-school night and a picnic with a raffle.
  - The sixth-grade musical interest meeting for "Matilda Jr." took place.
  - A Zoom learning session on "Brown v Board of Education" occurred in the middle school.
  - The cast list for the seventh and eighth-grade production of "Godspell" was announced.
  - The tech interest meeting for "Godspell" is scheduled for Thursday.
  - Middle school picture day is also on Thursday.
- High school spirit week is ongoing with themed days and competitions.
- Students are dressing up for Spirit Week, and picture days are taking place this week.
- A club fair happened on Wednesday for students to explore available clubs.
- Homecoming and the pep rally are scheduled for this weekend.

- There will be a vote for the best dance number by sports teams, with the winning team receiving a pizza party.
- Senior PL retreat and freshman PL retreat updates will be provided by Eliana in the next meeting.

## 7. FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

### A. [Facilities Committee Update](#)

- Joseph Ciserano, Architect with H2M Architects & Engineers, presented a facilities update to the Board, noting that they recently met with the Facilities Committee to present a five-year plan and priority projects, which include adding space for new programs, maintenance, infrastructure improvements, and addressing overcrowding issues.
- Maureen Caraballo emphasized the current space limitations and overcrowding, impacting programmatic offerings and section splits, particularly at the eighth-grade level. She also noted that this discussion was an early one, and more meetings would follow.
  - [Click here to view the presentation and discussion](#)

## 8. PUBLIC COMMENT

### A. Public Comment

- No public comment

## 9. PRESENTATIONS

### A. [POHL Update on Action Plan Development](#)

- Melissa Szymanski, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction presented an update on The Portrait of a Hastings Learner and the action plan development. The process involved various stakeholders, including students, and was informed by surveys and focus groups. Four action steps were developed, focusing on enhanced authentic learning opportunities, an advisory-like opportunity to support SEL and students' sense of belonging, a community charter around behavioral expectations and restorative practices. The plans underwent refinement and review by the leadership team. Melissa outlined key 18-month steps for each plan and mentioned future considerations beyond 18 months. She emphasized the collaboration, innovation, and positive behavior recognition achieved during the process.
  - [Click here to view the slide presentation](#)
  - [Click here to view the video presentation and discussion](#)

## 10. BUSINESS

### A. [Business Items](#)

1. Kim Sava, Costume Designer - HS play, invoice.
2. July and August 2023 Revenue and Expenditure reports.
3. Appointment of Jeanne Keefe Impartial Hearing Officer Case #610249.
4. Approve the use of Reserve for Liability Claims, to increase the budget in the amount of \$235,000 for a Special Education Settlement.
5. Warrants.
6. The Lice Lady of Westchester Proposal.
7. Mahopac Central School District, Contract for Educational Services.
8. Budget Transfer.
9. Pleasantville Union Free School District, Contract for Educational Services.
10. PNW BOCES, Professional Development and Coaching Support for District Data Team, contract.
11. Living Environment, Inner Orbit Student License, quote.
12. HES & FMS Mathematics Intervention Resource, Number Worlds, quote.
13. PILOBOLUS INC., invoice for Performance of Rules @ Play at Hillside Elementary School.
14. Josh Govier, Videography - HHS Play, invoice.
15. Hastings Compost Services LLC, service contract for compost collection.
16. HES Communications Program: Mathematics Resource, Connecting Math Concepts, quote.

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 Maureen Lennon-Santana.  
Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Silvia Robles, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Maureen Lennon-Santana, Jodie Meyer, Theresa McCaffrey

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 2023-2024 school year:

CSE: 12670, 12398, 11293, 11148, 10462

CPSE: 12549, 12597

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 Damaris-Lois Lang.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Silvia Robles, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Maureen Lennon-Santana, Jodie Meyer, Theresa McCaffrey

**11. PERSONNEL**

A. [Approve Consent Agenda](#)

Resolution: RESOLVED, to approve agenda items 11B through 11E as contained on the Consent Agenda for this meeting.

RESOLVED, to approve agenda items 11B through 11E as contained on the Consent Agenda for this meeting.

Motion by Jodie Meyer, second by Maureen Lennon-Santana.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Silvia Robles, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Maureen Lennon-Santana, Jodie Meyer, Theresa McCaffrey

B. Appointments

1. Adriana Beaudreault, appoint to position of School Registrar effective July 1, 2023- June 30, 2024.
2. Beth Habermann, appoint to position of Hearing Officer Coordinator for the 2023-2024 school year at a stipend of \$1,500.
3. Joanne Cipollina, appoint to position of Head Nurse at the Farragut Complex for the 2023-2024 school year.
4. Una Mullen, appoint to position of Head Nurse at Hillside Elementary School for the 2023-2024 school year.
5. Adriana Beaudreault, appoint to position of Data Team Coordinator for the 2023-2024 school year.
6. Appoint to position of Data Team for the 2023-2024 school year:  
Beth Habermann  
Gary Smith
7. CSEA Auxilliary Personnel, recommendation to appoint the following Mentors for the 2023-2024 school year:  
Michele Avila  
Michele Porter  
Adriana Beaudreault
8. CSEA Auxilliary Personnel, recommendation to appoint the following Morning Arrival Playground Safety Coordinators for the 2023-2024 school year:  
Antoinette DeSouza  
Juliana Alvim Dal Piaz
9. CSEA Auxilliary Personnel, recommendation to appoint the following Dismissal Playground Safety Coordinators for the 2023-2024 school year:  
Antoinette DeSouza  
Juliana Alvim Dal Piaz

10. Colin Rooney, appoint to position of School Monitor, effective September 18, 2023.
11. Johanny Almonte-Diaz, appoint to position of School Monitor, effective September 14, 2023.
12. Gianna Zanchelli, appoint to per diem substitute teacher district-wide effective September 28, 2023.
13. Paige Monte, appoint as student observer at Hillside Elementary School for 48 hours during fall semester, 2023.
14. Alysha Horstman, appoint to Regular Substitute/Leave Replacement to cover a leave of absence, MA Step 3, \$74,049 (to be pro-rated), effective October 2, 2023-January 31, 2024.
15. Updated Schedule B spreadsheet. ([Enc](#))
16. Joan Felipe, Mathematics teacher at Farragut Middle School, appoint to an additional .2 FTE effective September 28, 2023-January 30, 2024.
17. Terrance Thomas, appoint to position of sub cleaner in Buildings and Grounds effective September 28, 2023.
18. Josh Blum, retired HHS English teacher, appoint to Per Diem substitute (retiree rate), effective September 27, 2023 for the 2023-2024 school year.

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

RESOLVED, to approve agenda items 11B through 11E as contained on the Consent Agenda for this meeting.

Motion by Jodie Meyer, second by Maureen Lennon-Santana.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Silvia Robles, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Maureen Lennon-Santana, Jodie Meyer, Theresa McCaffrey

#### C. Amendments

1. James Adamo, amend appointment date for an additional .2 FTE Spanish position at Farragut Middle School to be effective August 29, 2023-November 3, 2023.
2. Francesca Hagadus, amend appointment date for an additional .4 FTE Spanish position at Farragut Middle School to be effective August 29, 2023-November 3, 2023.
3. Katie Paz, amend appointment date for an additional .2 FTE Spanish position at Hastings High School to be effective August 29, 2023-November 3, 2023.
4. Catherine Merchant, teacher assistant at Hillside Elementary School, amend her retirement date to September 15, 2023.
5. Anthony Scioscia, district-wide Per Diem Substitute teacher, appoint to Regular Substitute teacher at Farragut Middle School, BA, Step 1, \$61,056 (to be pro-rated) effective September 18, 2023-October 20, 2023.

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

RESOLVED, to approve agenda items 11B through 11E as contained on the Consent Agenda for this meeting.

Motion by Jodie Meyer, second by Maureen Lennon-Santana.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Silvia Robles, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Maureen Lennon-Santana, Jodie Meyer, Theresa McCaffrey

#### D. Retirement

1. Bethanne Habermann, Secretary to School Administrator has provided notice of resignation for the purpose of retirement effective January 30, 2024.

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

RESOLVED, to approve agenda items 11B through 11E as contained on the Consent Agenda for this meeting.

Motion by Jodie Meyer, second by Maureen Lennon-Santana.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Silvia Robles, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Maureen Lennon-Santana, Jodie Meyer, Theresa McCaffrey

#### E. Leaves of absence

1. Lisa Duquette, Elementary K-6 teacher at Farragut Middle School has requested a leave of absence as follows: FMLA with pay September 11, 2023-October 18, 2023. She will return to work on October 19, 2023.
2. Sara Koch, School Nurse at Hillside Elementary School, has requested a leave of absence without pay, September 19, 2023-September 29, 2023. She will return to work October 2, 2023.

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

RESOLVED, to approve agenda items 11B through 11E as contained on the Consent Agenda for this meeting.

Motion by Jodie Meyer, second by Maureen Lennon-Santana.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Silvia Robles, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Maureen Lennon-Santana, Jodie Meyer, Theresa McCaffrey

## 12. MINUTES

### A. [Approval of Minutes](#)

1. Approval of Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 12, 2023.

RESOLVED that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the Board of Education accepts the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 12, 2023.

Motion by Theresa McCaffrey, second by Damaris-Lois Lang.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Silvia Robles, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Maureen Lennon-Santana, Jodie Meyer, Theresa McCaffrey

## 13. NEW BUSINESS

### A. [Hastings High School - Italy Trip](#)

- The Board discussed the details of a high school trip to Italy for the Latin club. Ellen Driscoll's comprehensive memo outlined the trip's itinerary, including cultural activities like dancing the Tarantella, touring the Colosseum, and learning about mozzarella production. Concerns were raised about the trip's high cost, and the possibility of fundraising to offset expenses was discussed.

## 14. SECOND PUBLIC COMMENT

### A. Second Public Comment

- No public comment

## 15. AGENDA REVIEW

### A. [Agenda Review](#)

- October 11th - Adopt the District Code of Conduct

## 16. BOARD OF EDUCATION COMMENTS

### A. [Comments](#)

- Maureen Lennon-Santana raised a concern regarding the changes in seventh and eighth-grade lunch and recess, indicating that there have been challenges such as food availability and seating. She suggested checking in on the situation to assess how things are progressing.
- Theresa McCaffrey added that she has heard similar concerns, especially about food shortages and overcrowding, affecting fifth through eighth grades.

- Maureen Caraballo responded, mentioning that adjustments have been made, and the cafeteria staff is adapting to the increased demand, which includes serving both middle school and high school students. She acknowledged some initial challenges, including staffing shortages and the need for additional equipment like pizza ovens. Plans for setting up hot stations closer to the salad bar were discussed to improve the flow of food service. Maureen emphasized the importance of evaluating the situation, monitoring food volume, and addressing any issues promptly.
- Dr. Lang raised concerns about food service in the middle school and mentioned the option of pre-ordering, similar to what is done at Hillside. She noted that pre-ordering could help ensure that the cafeteria prepares the right amount of food, preventing shortages or overproduction.
- Maureen Caraballo acknowledged the challenges and mentioned that there have been improvements, particularly now that they are fully staffed. She expressed the need to gather more data to assess the situation further.

## **17. ADJOURNMENT**

### A. [Adjournment](#)

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

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

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yes: Silvia Robles, Alexander Dal Piaz, Damaris-Lois Lang, Maureen Lennon-Santana, Jodie Meyer, Theresa McCaffrey

*Melissa DeLaBarrera*

**Submitted by:**

**Melissa DeLaBarrera**

**District Clerk**