

MINUTES

Hoosac Valley Regional School Committee
School Committee Meeting
Monday, February 5, 2024 - 6:30 p.m.
Hoosac Valley High School
125 Savoy Road, Cheshire, MA

PRESENT: Mike Mucci, John Duval, Andrew Przystanski, Erin Milne, Mike Henault, Adam Emerson, Robert Tetlow

ABSENT:

OTHERS: Superintendent Aaron Dean

104149 Call to Order

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

104150 Public Comment or Question - None

104151 Approval of Minutes - January 8, 2024

MOTION: On Motion of Erin Milne and second by Andy Przystanski:

VOTED: to approve the January 8, 2024 School Committee minutes. The vote was 5-0-2

104152 Report of Treasurer/Business Manager - None

104153 Report of Sub Committee -

A. Maintenance: Aaron: did a walkthrough at the elementary school. Had to replace 2 boilers, showed the committee what happened with the old units. Should add another replacement next year. 2 boilers are doing well, but we need a solid 3 boilers. Walked around the building, looked at areas where there are small leaks in the roof. Looked at sidewalks, examined the auditorium. Talked about things that have been done over the year, tiles, etc. Discussed the high school, one roof leak that is persistent, going to have another discussion with Tremco. Touched based on the roof project on the gyms, 90% done. Upgrades for the HVAC controllers at the high school are on the list. Doing a further evaluation with the HVAC system at the elementary school as well. Mike Mucci: We have done a lot of upgrades in the schools over the years.

104154 Communications -

A. \$500.00 grant - Exxon Mobil - Erin Beaulac was approached by Exxon Mobil stating that they receive a \$500.00 grant. Exxon Mobil does a lot of funding for the schools. A representative from Exxon presented the check to the elementary school. There are no guidelines for the use of the money. Diving into an effort around differentiation. Leadership team is creating a resource book, and hoping that this can help. Will talk about the use as a team.

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

VOTED: to accept the \$500.00 donation from Exxon Mobil. The vote was unanimous.

B. Sue Garcia - out-of-state-field trip - last year the 7th grade went to Boston to the Freedom Trail. This year, brainstorming an end of year trip, proposed to go to the Science Center in Hartford Connecticut, hands on museum. All

exhibits are tied to standards. \$14.00 per child - 79 students. Need to take 8 adults. Talked about what the exhibits are. Funding through fundraising and grants. Bussing will be covered. Looking towards the second week of June.

MOTION: On Motion of Andy Przystanski and second by Erin Milne:

VOTED: to approve the Science Center field trip in Hartford, Connecticut. The vote was unanimous.

C. DEIB Advisory - Erin Milne presented. A year ago, the committee voted to establish a DEIB group. Why DEIB? Saw a need based on family and student feedback; disaggregated student data; rapidly diversifying demographics; Partners see a need - recommendations and support from DESE; Williams College Intern Research; John Duval, Aaron Dean and Erin attended the 2022 MASC/MASS Conference, the take away that this was an important project.

The Assignment from the School Committee: Develop recommendations from the School Committee, based on fact and research, related to matters of DEI in the District. Establish an internal purpose: We exist to advocate for, include, and uplift the voices of historically underserved members of the Hoosac Community.

Process of Selecting Committee: Advertised at open houses, newsletter; express interest; School Committee would appoint members to one-year terms.

Discussed the current membership - broad variety of members.

Impact on students and staff: how do we measure student impact? Equity-minded data analysis - survey data (school climate, sense of belonging- attendance data; overall improvement and closing of attainment gaps; How do we measure staff impact? Shifts in teacher practice (observational and qualitative data) - Pauses to reflect on long held practices; Retention.

The impact so far was an opportunity to share experiences with others. Not our responsibility to change opinions. World of Difference - contacts with organizations; DEAR (drop everything and read) -ACE Grant - Read Across America; Diverse Literature; Recognize need to do more; Making all learning fun.

Professional Development - 2023-2024 P.D. Series with DEI Outdoors - Bias, identity, inclusive practices & Toolbox; Summer P.D. Opportunities - Trauma Informed Practices 101: Understanding Impacts of a Child's Trauma with Michael Smith from Optimal Healing; Book Clubs; Anti-Racist Family Engagement Series with DESE.

Tools informing our work: DEI outdoors audit; School Committee Policy Review; Partnerships with other area organizations doing similar work; Have been reading - Changing the Narrative: How to Foster an Anti-Racist Culture in your School;

The long term strategy: Examine data and give a voice to those that are underserved by our school community; provide research and recommendations for policy decisions and district strategic plans; provide recommendations for professional development that will support staff in creating an inclusive school environment; support the school community by bringing the voices of the various stakeholder groups to the table. We want to have a broad representation of the community.

Mike Mucci: what will happen in the next six months? Erin: the biggest will be the audit and then we can see what our short term/long term goals are. Mike thanked Erin for her presentation.

104155 Report of Superintendent -

A. Budget - Preliminary budget figures - good news as to where we are at with the budget. Will be able to continue key work that we started. Preliminary Revenue: Chapter 70 increased \$584,00; Municipal Minimum increased \$242,000; Charter School Reimbursement increased \$175,000; Medicaid Reimbursements remained at \$80,000.

Expenditure Increases: Contract Obligations: \$500,000; Math Curriculum Consumables: \$31,000; School Choice Assessment - \$175,000; Charter Assessment: \$296,000; Adams Retirement: \$37,000; Transportation: \$33,000; Utilities: \$20,000.

Maintenance: Upcoming Maintenance Projects: Elementary school sidewalks, boilers, EDM projects, gutters, spandrel panels; High School water fountains - 2 water bottle style, 1 at the middle school and high school side; MS/HS roofs.

Balancing the budget: Personnel Reductions: \$570,00 (\$213,000 moved to CPPI) - CPPI - allows us to provide full day Pre-K programming without the burden of staffing in the operating budget; ESSER shifts - HVE Dean, HS Computers, Middle School Health/PE; Staffing - reductions mainly through attrition, restructuring and elimination of unfilled positions; Insurance - health insurance line item remains the same as last year - positions that were projected as a potential need remained unfilled, FY25 staff reductions.

Other Considerations: Enrollment decreased approximately 30 students - we need to continue addressing push factors; Enrollment splits are dynamic between the 2 communities - this impacts over minimum contributions and capital expenditures; Revolving Account usage will increase with the expiration of ESSER - we need to plan how to best utilize for personnel, athletics and curriculum purchases; We continue to pursue grants that will enhance our work such as Pathways and CPPI grants.

Aaron: next meeting will have the draft budget. Will need at least 2 A & E meetings. Adam: any feedback from the Town of Cheshire after the meeting? Aaron: no concerns, asked for information electronically. Good open discussion. Tried to prepare Cheshire with the shift. Important pieces were said.

104156 Chairman's - None

104157 Unfinished Business - Regional District Agreement - did get some names from The Town of Adams, still need to fill some gaps, selectboard from Adams. Need a school committee member from Cheshire.

104158 New Business - None

104159 Action Items - None

104160 For the Good of the Order:

Erin Milne: Thanks to the DEIB committee for all the work they have done.

Mike Mucci: pathway signing- very positive event. The District did a good job, interesting event, good energy.

John Duval: Thanks to Erin and the DEI committee for their work

Mike Henault: Thanked Aaron for the budget presentation, have a vision of where you want the district to be.

MOTION: On Motion of Adam Emerson and second by John Duval:

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Aaron Dean, Superintendent

Lisa Bresett, Recording Secretary