

## MINUTES

Hoosac Valley Regional School Committee  
School Committee Meeting  
Monday, November 18, 2024 - 6:30 p.m.  
Hoosac Valley High School - Resource Room  
125 Savoy Road, Cheshire, MA

**PRESENT:** John Duval, Andy Przystanski, Robert Tetlow, Erin Milne, Fred Lora,

**ABSENT:** Adam Emerson, Mike Henault

**OTHERS:** Superintendent Aaron Dean

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**104253 Call to Order**

Vice Chair Erin Milne called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**104254 Public Comment or Question - None**

**104255 Approval of Minutes - October 21, 2024**

**MOTION:** On Motion of John Duval and second by Fred Lora:

VOTED: to approve the October 21, 2024. The vote 3-0-1.

**104256 Report of Business Manager - None**

**104257 Report of Sub Committee - None**

**104258 Communications -**

**A. Spotlight on Applied Learning - 3rd grade responsive classroom** - Kristen Palatt: highlighting great work happening at individual schools and bringing them to the school committee. This meeting, Ms. Beaulac and third graders will be modeling a morning meeting. Students: Ashton & Austin Akroman, Hope Braun, Helena Nocher, Caleb Ziter, Hudson Ziter, Sophie Czupryna, Max Pizani & Mila-Kaye Hopkins. Also in attendance are Christine Kirchner and Kim Trimarchi. Mrs. Kirchner and Mrs. Trimarchi discussed how the morning meeting works. The morning meeting takes about 15-20 minutes and the whole school does it at the same time. Students interacted with the committee members on how the morning meeting works.

**B. School Improvement Plans** - Colleen Byrd, Erin Beaulac, Lisa Lesser, JJ Choquette, Regina Diesz, Nancy Acquista, Shelly Fachini, Monica Zanin, Mary Ott, Alissa Rosier, Bridget O'Neil-Hopkins, Brian Wert - Kristen Palatt gave a brief explanation of the presentation. The key to all of the plans is alignment. Everything that has been done was through an equity lens. Identified 3 focus areas for each building. All three schools ended up with the same 3 priority areas. (See attached SIP)

Priority 1: Instructional Improvement and Academic Achievement - Consistent End of Year: Student Impact/Culture: 4 out of 4 accountability points will be earned for achievement on MCAS - 85% of students meeting or achieving growth EOY Benchmarks: Family Partnership: Resources/activities to practice skills that support learning at home; DEIB- 100% of students will receive tiered instruction based on their needs; 100% of students from historically marginalized groups will grow at a level comparable with their peers. Staff Culture: 100% of staff will demonstrate increased efficacy with strategies to promote instructional improvement - Alissa, Bridget and Regina spoke about the drivers - Hoosac playbook, Portrait of a learner & applied learning; Multi-tiered system of support and Building thinking classrooms. Kristen asked if anyone had any questions on priority one. No questions.

Priority 2: Social Emotional Learning & Student Behavior - Consistent End of year Goals: Student Impact/Culture: 100% of students will demonstrate increased confidence with self regulation, identity and sense of belonging. Family Partnership: 100% of caregivers

will be provided with information on MTSS and Responsive Classroom, Developmental Design, and ACE; 100% of caregivers will be invited to a Behavior and SEL workshop; DEIB: 100% of students will receive tiered instruction based on their needs; 100% of students from historically marginalized groups will be represented in the behavior data at a level that is comparable with their peers; Staff Culture: 100% of staff will demonstrate increased efficacy with strategies for behavior management and social emotional learning. Erin Beaulac, JJ Choquette and Brian Wert spoke about the drivers - Advisory, Crew, Reset/Rise, ACE, and UDL. Kristen asked if anyone had questions on priority two. Erin Milne: appreciate commitment to high levels to success, however, you can't compare groups to one another by counting individual students, recommend to change how that is worded, under DEIB particularly, instead of talking about 100% of students, what is the equity gap, is it lower than last year, something along those lines. Track referral data in powerschool? Kristen: Yes - Erin: don't see anything about that in there and it would be great to track that compared to last year, in terms of severity, etc. Bob: students go into RESET for 10-15 minutes to compose themselves, how many rooms in the middle school? JJ: 1 class, an average of 15-30 students per day, depending on the day. Some students have scheduled breaks. There is a clear process when students go in. JJ Choquette discussed the process. Fred Lora: capturing behavioral data - by grade, age, race, ethnicity and various escalating levels, does that data exist year in and year out? Kristen: yes, more so just recently. Refined our data systems. Fred - there is a perception with tax payers that this data isn't being captured and not being addressed. Putting that out there going into budget season. Erin Milne: This information is on the office of civil rights website

Priority 3: Implementation of the new IEP and Access for all Students: Consistent End of year goals - Student Impact Culture: 100% of SWD will make growth on the IEP goals as measured in progress reports; Family Partnership: 100% of caregivers and students will be the leading voice in determining the goals and vision written in the IEP; DEIB - As measured by walkthroughs, 100% of SWD will be provided with accommodations and access points to be included and engaged in all school experiences; Staff Culture: 100% of staff will demonstrate increased efficacy with strategies to promote their ability to accommodate and modify for all their students as measured by the EOY survey data. Monica Zanin, Shelly Fachini, Nancy Acquist and Mary Ott spoke about the drivers. Working with Buzz education, under the umbrella of DESE. Looking at how to work with Tier 1 instruction, how to help them provide everything possible so students are getting everything they need. New IEP process - did a lot of work getting ready for it. The model has changed, bringing all stakeholders to the table, which includes the student. Kristen asked if there are any questions for priority 3. Erin Milne: Concerned about measuring efficacy using survey data, walkthroughs might be more helpful. Kristen stated that they do do walkthroughs. Definitely not our sole measure. Also, UDL just came out with their 3.0 framework, might want to look at for ideas- it is to help with SWD specifically. Robert Tetlow: number of IEPs? High School: approximately 80 students, middle school in the low 70's. Grades K - 5 - 90-95 and preschool over 100. Erin Beaulac stated that the younger ones might only have 1 accommodation - speech in particular.

## **104259 Report of Superintendent**

**A. Calendar Review** - Aaron went over the events for the month of November - Report cards come out; conferences, fundraisers, theater performances, middle school fall fun run, Thanksgiving break.

**B. Absenteeism** - Aaron discussed absenteeism - high school average is 92.9%; middle school is 93.8% and elementary school average is 94.2% for the year. Approaching the 95% goal. Student Tracking: Elementary school 85% on track, high school is 82% on track and middle school is 83% on track. Staff working hard to get students to come to school. Couple of years ago we were in the 70's for attendance. Seeing steps in the right direction.

**C. DEIB Update** - Struggled to get this particular committee off the ground at the start of the year. Message of this work remains difficult. Goals: Safe environment for all our students - psychologically and physically; provide all students with access rigors and engaging learning experiences; Ensure that our students are known and their voices are heard and represented. Safe environment for all students - student support - take a break space within classrooms; reset/student support spaces, Partnership with Optimal healing; support staff - always collaborating for plans with students - School Psychologists, BCBAs, SACs, Dean of Students; Code of Conduct, Anti-bullying policies; Collaboration with Elizabeth Freeman Center and DA Office. Provide all students with "access" to rigorous and engaging learning experiences: Pathways programming, Shift to Applied Learning Curricula/Practices; BBT processes and DCAPs - focus and retraining; Implementation of new IEP; ACE spaces at middle and high school; Collaborative Planning Processes - planning for accommodations; use of the Equity Pause to look more deeply at all students. Ensure that our students are known and their voices are heard and represented - CREW, Advisory, Morning Meeting; Student & Adult Advisory Board at the high school; Affinity groups with Dr. Bile; Annual Surveys; Reflecting on the celebration of holidays in school and shifting practices. We had to be more thoughtful on how we do holidays in the schools. We need to take into consideration all students. Last year we took a hard stance, it's ok to celebrate, but you have to be thinking about everybody and it has to be connected to the work with the curriculum. Last year we made a solid shift and this year we need to keep reminding people that we need to be inclusive with this work, we need to understand the different students in our classroom. We are a public school, not a parochial school, there is a big

difference in what we can and should be doing. The message has never been you can never do anything it has been we need to have discussions, how this impacts all of the students. A lot of work and thought has gone into this. Always looking at more ways that we can better serve everybody. Making all the voices known in our schools. Finally getting the board up and running - list of DEIB Committee members: Erin Strek, Ryan Strek, Kristen Palatt, Monica Zanin, Erin Milne, Julia Marko, Kelly Reichers, Missy Tarjick, Jen Solak, Monican Carpenter, Susan Sauve & Aaron Dean. Principals sent out weekly newsletters and social media for anyone interested in joining this committee. Erin Milne is looking for a motion to appoint the above for the DEIB advisory committee for this school year.

Motion: On Motion of John Duval and second by Andy Przystanski:

VOTED: to appoint the above members to the DEIB advisory committee for the 2024-2025 school year. The vote was 3-0-1.

Fred Lora: entering the extended holiday period, fully expect to see the elementary school decorated with turkeys, etc. Thanksgiving related items. Is that a policy, a discussion, Principals going to figure all that out? Aaron: the expectation is that the projects are tied to learning, many of the holidays are tied to our standards. Teachers & Principals will have discussions on the best way to manage - make sure there is something for everyone. We need equal representation, if we have a Christmas tree, what are we doing for the other holidays? Looking for a balance, looking for neutrality.

**104260 Chairman's Report - None**

**104261 Unfinished Business -**

**A. Superintendent's Evaluation - Tabled until December 9, 2024 meeting**

**B. S.C. Evaluations** - Erin Milne wants to start the conversation. We should be evaluating ourselves as a body, need to set goals, this has not been our practice. Aaron suggested talking to someone from MASC. Liz Lafond from MASC might be a resource. Aaron can put something together around the frequency of committees and times of year doing most of the work. Aaron will give the trends on when the committee meets. Erin will do more research on what MASC says they need to evaluate themselves on. Will bring back to the committee

**C. Veteran's Day event** - Fred drafted a letter thanking the veteran recruiters and asking the committee to sign.

**104262 New Business** - Fred Lora: MCAS no longer a graduation requirement. Aaron: There will be some different reporting requirements going forward. Do not know what they will be as of yet.

**104263 Action Items - None**

**104264 For the Good of the Order -**

John Duval: appreciate the students demonstrating all the good things that are happening in our schools.

Robert Tetlow: Thanked Fred for writing the letters to the recruiters.

Erin Milne: happy about the new calendar segment.

**MOTION:** On Motion of Robert Tetlow and second by Andy Przystanski:

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Aaron Dean, Superintendent

Lisa Bresett, Recording Secretary