



NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Learning & Teaching Committee

February 12, 2020

54 Meadow Street, 2nd Floor Board Room

New Haven, CT 06517

In attendance: Mr. Wilcox (Chair of Meeting), Dr. Joyner (Co-Chair of Committee), Dr. Iline Tracey (Interim Superintendent), Keisha Hannans, Dr. Paul Whyte, Joseph Steele, Cynthia Scheetz, Tarena Gadsden, Natalie Robinson, Dr. Richard Therrien, Pedro Mendia, Lynn Brantley, Carmen Ana Rodriguez, Dr. Michele Sherban, Pamela Augustine-Jefferson, Kenneth Mathews, Sandra Clark, Jessica Haxhi

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m.

1. Welcome, Introductions, and Announcements

- Mr. Wilcox welcomed everyone and there were brief introductions. He noted that Dr. Joyner and Mr. Conaway will be the new Co-Chairs of the Committee.

2. Field Trips for Approval

DATES	SCHOOL	LOCATION	GRADE	Students: Chaperones	Requested by	Chaperones
3/3- 3/5/2020	Clinton Avenue	Hulbert Outdoor Leadership Program Fairlee, VT	7 and 8	20:2	Lauren Sepulveda	Lauren Sepulveda Benjamin Carter
4/14- 4/16/20	Wilbur Cross	Kissimmee, Florida	HS	3:2	Joseph Steele	Joseph Steele Brian Ginrod
4/20- 4/22/20	Adult Education	Washington, D.C., Baltimore, MD Bowie, MD Dover, MD	HS	20:4	Michelle Bonora	Tarena Gadsden Natalie Robinson Cortney Dunlap Richard Cowes
4/28- 5/3/20	Hill Regional Career	Detroit, MI	HS	20:2	Cynthia Scheetz	Cynthia Scheetz William Frank

MOTION: Mr. Wilcox moved that the field trips be approved and moved to the full board. It was seconded by Dr. Joyner.

3. Update Strategic Planning (Dr. Tracey)

Dr. Tracey noted that there will be three community meetings regarding the Strategic Plan upcoming in February, and two in March. The target is to complete the Strategic Plan by April.

4. Update on Ninth grade on Track/Success (Dr. Sherban)

- Dr. Sherban presented about how 9th graders are doing as of Quarter 2 in terms of Grades and Attendance. See attached PowerPoint for data presentation.
- Dr. Joyner noted that the data was presented in a way that was easy to understand. He discussed how good systems focus on the students in the bottom two quartiles (i.e., as seen in this data) and moving them up. He noted that interest, attention, and memory are key and emphasized the need to put highly interesting books in classrooms in order to engage students.
- Dr. Therrien commented that Supervisors are working with teachers at Hillhouse, doing observations, and providing feedback regularly.
- Dr. Joyner talked about his experiences working recently with classrooms at Mauro Sheridan, Nathan Hale and HSC and noted how the students are very engaged when the content is something that holds high interest for them.
- Mr. Wilcox asked how interventions for 9th graders are being evaluated.
- Dr. Sherban explained that the schools have the data presented “live” in a dashboard. They are able to click on the data and drill down to the student-level, in order to have informed conversations. Schools also use this data to do student-led conferences.
- Dr. Joyner asked if “single group time series designs” are being used to track students. He recalled that method was used years ago to track student progress in Title I and there were significant gains. He would like to see more use of the method to look at student data.

5. Update on the State Accountability Report (Dr. Sherban)

- Dr. Sherban shared the results of the State Accountability Report.
- She noted that the Barack H. Obama School (formerly Strong School) did particularly well on the State Accountability Report. They earned 74.8 overall accountability index, placing them in Category 2, up from Category 3 the previous year.
- Celentano had the largest 1-year gain in Accountability. They made growth in every single area noted in the report, except for 1A.
- High School in the Community made progress in moving out of “Turnaround Status.” It is based on the 6-year graduation rate. The improvement represents the impact of the new administration.
- Dr. Joyner commented on the success and hard work of the Principal at High School in the Community (Matthew Brown) and the teachers at the school.
- Wexler-Grant made gains in their Accountability Index of 6 points from last year.
- Dr. Joyner talked about the need to disaggregate the data to show two sets of students: (1) students who have been in NHPS over time and (2) those who have transferred in from other districts.
- Mr. Mendia noted that the Accountability Measures model has an emphasis on growth. Every student in the data contributes to those indicators. He expressed that schools to be assisted in helping schools to look at the data for the sub-groups and address the needs of those students specifically.
- Dr. Joyner noted the challenge of teaching when there are attendance or behavioral issues. He expressed the importance of “matching our commitment” [to education].

- Dr. Wilcox commented that compelling curriculum, good pedagogy are also essential components.

6. District Literacy Plan Follow-Up (Lynn Brantley)

- Ms. Brantley had given an extended presentation on the District Literacy Plan at the Board meeting on February 10, 2020. She had presented preliminary data at the Board meeting, but now they have more results and are disaggregating the data.
- Mr. Wilcox noted that there is an opportunity in the school plans to bring in Library Media services and access to books students want to read. He expressed how we can serve the literacy of parents as well, as they work with their own children.
- Ms. Brantley said that she believes there is more work to do and more opportunities in building relationships with parents.
- Mr. Wilcox noted the citywide the library systems, New Haven Reads, etc.
- Dr. Tracey talked about the importance of finding students' interests in order to spark their interest in reading. She shared some of her own experience teaching at Jackie Robinson.
- Dr. Therrien concurred and gave an example from science (e.g., dinosaurs are not included in state science frameworks for elementary).
- Dr. Joyner shared other examples of the importance of high-interest books and topics in motivating students to read.
- Dr. Joyner and Mr. Wilcox talked about the need to provide better classroom libraries and how corporate funding and other donations for that purpose.
- Ms. Hannans expressed the need for students in the younger grades to take books home on a regular basis.

7. Alternative Education Policy (Dr. Paul Whyte)

- The Committee looked over the proposed alternative education policy.
- Dr. Whyte explained that the new policy would allow NHPS to look at the possibility of using more of the virtual school model, and other paths to credit for students.
- Mr. Wilcox had added the term "equitable" to the second paragraph and removed some wording from the CABE sample. Dr. Therrien took notes on the changes to the policy wording discussed.
- Mr. Wilcox noted that the new policy would require NHPS to name the alternative programs and report on them annually to the Board. He expressed that the need for alternative programs to be housed in various schools to meet the needs of students.
- Dr. Joyner noted that there need to be standards for the alternative schools related to Title IX (and ensuring that they have adequate resources, labs, etc.)
- Dr. Tracey talked about the need to move away from seat time and Carnegie units for the alternative model. We need to determine what that type of model would look like, perhaps with internships, "centers of learning" in different places, etc.
- Dr. Sherban noted that when we adopt new graduation requirement policies, we need to build in flexibility for our alternative programs.
- Mr. Wilcox explained that the **Alternative Education Policy will go to the Governance Committee next. Dr. Therrien should pass along the changes that were discussed in this Committee.**

8. Review of Select Instructional Board of Education Policy Adoptions

- See attached list of potential board policies that are under consideration to be adopted as recommended and supplied by CABE (Connecticut Association of Boards of Education).
 - Dr. Therrien explained that there are **three policies that would require further discussion before approval: Graduation Requirements, Homework, and Instructional Material Selection.**
 - The Academics Team would like to collate the graduation requirements of all of the high schools and current district requirements so that a detailed discussion could be held.
 - The “Parent Instruction at Home” policy appears acceptable as provided by CABE, with the district looking at the best way to implement the requirements.
 - Mr. Wilcox said that the Teaching and Learning Committee work would be advisory to the Governance Committee. There are some Instructional Policies for which the Teaching and Learning Committee would like to have input on.
 - Dr. Whyte asked if part of the graduation requirement discussion could be the “New Haven Diploma” which would reflect the minimum number of credits to graduate. When students transfer, there are often discrepancies between the requirements at the schools and students sometimes do not have enough credit to graduate at a different school.
 - Ms. Hannans noted that the Instructional Policies discussion should include more stakeholders, teachers, unions, etc.
 - Dr. Joyner expressed that the Instructional Policies should come through the Teaching and Learning Committee.
 - After the internal staff reviews the policies, the Teaching and Learning Committee will review them before sending them to Governance.
 - There will be no Committee action on the policies on the discussed list of policies at this time.
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- **Mr. Wilcox made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:04 PM.**

The next meeting is March 18, 2020

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Haxhi