

# Task Force on Student Academic Performance

Hudson City School District – Board of Education

Meeting 3 Minutes August 19, 2009 Hudson Intermediate School Band Room

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1. Open: 6:30PM.
2. Introductions / Sign in. Present were Martha Lane, Wayne Kinney, Theresa Moran, Nicky Genito, Annabel Lee, Di Stewart, Peter Meyer
3. Minutes from last meeting: corrections? No corrections
4. Changes to this agenda? No.
5. Readings . Peter handed out a 1998 memo from Jerry Tschudin, when Tschudin was a teacher at Hudson High and in charge of the district's Strategic Plan committee. That memo gives a succinct summary of the district's planning history, back to 1993, and points out that the original "plan" was "thorough, rational, internally consistent and certified by the ultimate decision-making body in the district – the school board.... The only thing that was left out was the accountability piece."
6. What should this Task Force's "final report" look like? Peter pointed out that the final report should give the board of education a range of options about improving the district's academic performance. It didn't have to "solve" the district's problems, but should give the board some well-researched and discussed suggestions about what it should do to improve that performance. He anticipated the final report to be about 10 pages long, including an introduction that would explain "where the district is now," an explanation of the three – or four or five or eight – avenues that were the most important factors contributing to improvement, and recommendations about what the district should do.
7. How should TFSAP do it? Though there was some discussion here about what the district should do, as opposed to what the Task Force should do, the group agreed that the TFSAP should proceed with our "investigation" of the issues, defined (in #8) below, using outside research materials, guest speakers (who are expert/knowledgeable in the subject discussed), surveys (of teachers, students, parents), and visits to districts (and their websites) like ours (demographically) that are doing better academically.
8. What should the TFSAP do? We decided to focus on eight general issues in our subsequent meetings. Peter and Theresa (Moran) would meet to suggest a "plan" for how to organize each issue per the schedule of remaining meetings (that plan to be part of next meeting's Agenda):
  - a. Where are we now? The state of student academic performance and how we got here. This should be the focus of our next meeting, per the 8/19 agenda. Are we a "high needs rural" district or not?

b. Curriculum, Assessments, and Test Scores. This remains an important subject, per the 8/19 agenda. But there remains some question as to what a curriculum is, whether the district has one, what it is, and what it should be.

c. Communication. Per the 8/19 agenda.

d. Administrative practices. There is a “huge” distrust of the administration and district practices. Too much inconsistency over the years, especially about staff training: it’s never done. Training has nothing to do with what we do. Too many people scream at kids. They don’t respect the kids; how can we expect them to want to learn.

e. Teaching. Turnover is a big problem in some schools. Why? Who chooses the teachers?

f. School culture. We have to educate people about the importance of education.

g. The future: Online education, budget crisis, dropping enrollment

h. OTHER. Martha suggested that there were some innovative things being tried elsewhere and hoped we would have the opportunity to discuss them in our meetings/report.

9. Working Groups. We did not break into working groups tonight.

10. Future meetings

--Next meeting September 2, 6:30pm, HHS Library.

11. Happy (belated) Birthday, Nicky!

12. Adjourn. (8:02pm)