

Hinsdale School Board Work Session
SAU Conference Room
April 11, 2023
5:00 PM

Board Members Present: April Anderson, Holly Kennedy, Kaylah Hemlow, Kendra Gardner, and Jeana Woodbury

Administration Present: Kim Caron, Interim Superintendent

Minutes Recorded by: Maria Webb, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

Call to Order:

A. Anderson called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Citizens' Comments:

A. Anderson opened citizens' comments for 30 minutes. There were no citizens present.

Discussion of Climate and Culture:

K. Caron shared a handout with suggested culture-climate-kindness goals. The Board discussed the need for strong leadership and communication. Expressed the need for administration and faculty to follow the handbook and policies consistently. Administration needs to support the teachers in following the policies.

To rebuild the school community everyone needs to be on the same page, from the Board to the students. Feels that administration ignores the Board and that students feel unsafe at HMHS. H. Kennedy stated that parental harassment of teachers, and also harassment by other teachers, is not typically addressed.

Discussed that expectations need to be enforced at HES so that the climate of HMHS can improve.

K. Caron noted that he has been spending time in various classrooms and feels that overall, this is a good place, where the students are generally engaged and meeting behavior expectations, and the teachers are doing well. Feels that there are good students, good teachers, but a negative climate. Noted that he recommended a principal's advisory group at HMHS to enhance communication, and that has been helpful. Noted that the HMHS Principal has addressed some issues with teachers that were impacting the culture.

K. Caron noted that good ethics and treating one another in a kind way has a positive impact on student achievement. Noted that he has observed a disconnect between the board, administration and staff, and that it will take a lot of work to fix it. Stressed the need for engagement and rigor.

Discussed starting with the frustrated teachers to see what is contributing to how they are feeling. Discussed the need for a staff survey.

K. Caron encouraged the Board to craft a statement of expectations for staff around culture. Noted that there is a need for a professional facilitator to assist with this initiative. K. Caron offered to help research sources for a potential facilitator and/or a template for a model for moving forward.

K. Caron noted that SEL is the most important need to focus on at this time. Shared regarding the March 2023 Professional Development training for staff and the SWOT activity in the afternoon. Feels that this aligns with the work that the staff has done so far. Noted that it is key to provide the time and resources and to make it a regular part of PD. Want to implement this in a way that supports and empowers the Principals.

The Board spoke positively of the connection and consistency of the HMHS Assistant Principal and the French teacher.

Discussed the need for team building and community building activities for staff.

Worked on a draft statement for the entire school community. Noted the need for measurable outcomes and for this to be monitored. K. Caron suggested obtaining input from teacher-leaders as a next step and a positive way to start the process and to gain momentum. Feel that their perspective will be very beneficial.

K. Caron shared that effective school boards have a strong collaborative relationship with staff and the community.

Discussed issuing the statement to staff first and then working with the teacher-leaders to draft a statement for the community.

The Board agreed for K. Caron to discuss this meeting with administration, the Principal's advisory group and the teacher-leaders to explain the goals of this project.

A. Anderson will share the draft statement from the Board with J. Woodbury who had to leave early before issuing the statement.

Other Business:

There was no other business.

Citizens' Comments:

There were no citizens present.

Non-Public Session:

There was no non-public session.

H. Kennedy MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 7:18 pm. K. Hemlow SECONDED. VOTE: 4-0-0, MOTION PASSED.

I attest that this is a true copy of the minutes:

Maria A. Webb

approved on _____