

CITY OF HOLYOKE

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

LOCAL CONTROL SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY , APRIL 8, 2024

TIME: 5:04 PM

CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Local Control sub-committee Chair Yadilette Rivera Colón called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and announced that pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, s. 20, attendees are hereby informed that a video and audio recording is being made of the meeting and the meeting is being live-streamed via zoom.

Present: Ms. Brunelle, Dr. Caballero-Roca, Dr. Rivera Colón, Mr. Romero

Also in attendance : Acting Commissioner Russel Johnston, DESE Chief of Staff: Ms. Lauren Woo, Mr. Collamore, Ms. Tensley -Williams, Mayor Garcia,

Item #1 - [Turnaround plan discussion](#): Focus on Improvement

Commissioner Johnston wondered about the process to take before we discuss substance. He had a proposal ready for us but would allow us to decide how to approach this process. Asked if he offers a suggestion or starts with an idea ?

- Dr. Rivera Colón, Local Control subcommittee has all the discussions broken down by priority areas. Subcommittee can listen to your suggestions.
- Mr. Johnston explains this idea of focusing on improvement . Look at the turn around plan again, appreciate that we come back to this topic we would need to come back later on to explore further. This is not just a one meeting topic, more so a topic we meet on and comeback and improve again later on.
- Mr. Johnston sees 14-15 areas where the turnaround plan focuses on improvement.
- Mr. Johnston states the Pathways at the high school including early college seem vital. Redesign of the high school If the district takes this one topic, focus on after receivership. Pathways is something we continue on ,does the school committee need more information?
 - 1 State agrees that the district should continue to focus on after receivership.
 - 2 Is it something that the school committee needs more information about in the way of either resources, or a training session .
 - 3rd Part How the school committee shows its improvement on th will the school committee show its focus on improvement by continuing to, you know? Look at the data. By looking at progress that the district is making with these initiatives? Look at data progress the district makes with these initiatives.
- Dr. Rivera Colón asked do any members of the committee have any questions to ask before we move forward ?
- Ms. Brunelle explains how the subcommittee prioritized areas amongst the members to

study more independently. Ms Brunelle asked Mr. Johnston 'when going through the recommendations as you want to go through them could you just suggest as to which Priority area? So it is aligned with our agenda and allows the committee to have more organized feedback.

- Dr. Caballero-Roca agrees with Ms. Brunelle that it will give us structure. Have everything completely aligned with the agenda. Dr. Rivera Colón agrees and Mr. Johnston complies as well to restructure as he goes along. It might be useful if he starts with a more concrete idea.

Mr. Johnston recommends the district start with Personalize pathways which are in Priority area 2.

- Personalized pathways having the focus on dual language programming. High School High Interest Pathways, linked Learning Academies and alternative education options for students programming such as the Opportunity Academy. Are these areas that the school committee wants to continue to support post receivership ? Later on when the subcommittee and State find out more information or ideas they can integrate and revisit the topic.

Ms. Brunelle's short answer is Yes. The Dual Language program is the shining star of our district. Academy and Pathways the district is doing a great job there. Block schedule that we shifted to for next year enhances and continuing what the students can accomplish .

- *An Area HPS can strengthen in the middle schools is to provide more arts, media, theater arts programs. When the New middle schools opened we could potentially develop an early education center.*

Dr. Rivera Colón is thinking a lot of the reason these initiatives work is because we have the funding for them . Students are more able to do these things when they are given the proper tools .

Dr. Caballero-Roca also supports her peers' choices. Are there any Standards that we should be adhering to when we bring up dual language programs and funding what are the expectations of the Department of Education with regards to these Programs ?

Russell- Great Question we do have guidelines. for developing programming. I wonder if that brings us to the next question. Are there any workshops the school committee needs to be ready for that ?

Ms. Brunelle states We can certainly get our newest members up to speed.

Pathways can get enhanced at a middle school level . Updated schedule to create more opportunities for deepening learning for high school students.

- We are discussing when the time falls under ? So we can keep track as we go since that's how we kept it on the agenda.

- Steady focus on the strategic plan the district should, More information for the school committee, and how Will the
- Future school committee meetings. Topics for tonight's discussion are also in the district's strategic Plans. Steady focus on the Strategic plan. Continue to focus on after the
- Mr. Johnston continues expressing the date progress and initiatives the district will continue to make with receivership of local control. Periodic Updates from on the strategic plan from the district.
- Ms. Brunelle priority areas to Suggest what priority and where it falls under in the agenda so we reference it . Best to divide the Coming thru home in tom time falls under.
- Dr. Caballero-Roca Enhancing the dual language program. Academy and pathways to the High school .Dr. Caballero- Roca Are we focusing on that kind of dual lingual? A support for our students because then they struggle, taking tests, and are we supporting them enough? That's another question that I have and if we could focus on that because it's part of the growth of our student body and not only to learn a language and study a foreign language, at least they speak Spanish but then, as we move on, and get a lot of families who need support in English, can we expand The concept of Dual Language?

Mr. Johnston State is in favor of Personalized pathways and High School College pathways.

Are there any information or workshops the school committee needs? hearing maybe it can be useful to get more information on High Quality Dual Language.

What would be useful is the school committee for those 3 areas to push forward on post receivership.

Mr. Johnston How will the school committee focus on something like this that is in the strategic plan for the District How will the school committee look ahead to planning agendas for the 24-25 School year ? Will they periodically come back to this as an important issue ? Part of a review for the. It's not a problem we have to solve right now, just something to process while we work towards the final Local control meeting.

Dr. Rivera Colón, lucky to have a great relationship with the receiver.

Strategic plan and the agendas align something we have always done and Mr. DSoto always supplies us with information . We always have this aligned so it won't be a challenge for the topics to align with the agenda.

Mr. Johnston advises to make sure our words don't just get lost. Beginning to draft this plan, This is a plan we can come up with together and I will stand behind. Put them in writing.

- Dr. Rivera Colón , There are meeting Minutes of this meeting of course. The Chair can compile these ideas. As the ideas are coming to put a draft together . When presented to the full school committee they will get a summary and a draft of ideas. Everyone will have a say and see first hand what the process will be.

- Ms. Brunelle suggested the subcommittee Working Sheet Google drive and taking notes similar to what they do with the meeting agendas. As far as the turn around plan goes . there all in writing. There is some fine tuning and getting to have a little more say. Overall strategic plans and goals . Enhancing moving forward. How are we as a Body functioning? Clear and set just need updates and adjustments.
- Mr. Johnston, is there any part of the strategic plan that the school committee wouldn't continue to promote or support post receivership ? If so lets have that conversation and If there are more items how do we go about them and do we vote on letting them go.
- Dr. Caballero-Roca points out that so much work and energy has been put into this transition in such a way the alignment is amazing. Work has been done and this committee has been very active. How can we know just before the receivership if any of the points should be left behind? This is no longer in need of support. Let us out of receivership continue work and what does not need to be incorporated .
- Ms. Brunelle if Mr. Johnston can read through his list and when we get those points we can revise and share our points and you do the same go over and come back with questions. So when we all come back together we can bring up talking points on each other's topics.

Acting Commissioner Russell Johnston goes over his own list of points within the Priority areas.

- **Priority Area 1** Investing in high quality instructional materials. We would recommend continuing on with. Developing district instructional expectations, providing all leaders and staff with professional development.
 - Development of early literacy instructional Programs focus on early literacy providing all teachers and leaders most students k through 2 with foundational reading skills.
- **Priority Area 2** Holyoke Public Schools instructional Framework.
 - Personalized pathways.
 - Expanding preschool access.
 - Development of social emotional systems and opportunities.
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- **Priority area 3** Development of the multi-tiered system of support; so that students get what they need in an individualized way.
 - Family and Community engagement. Professional development and planning for staff around family engagement.
 - Translation and Interpreter services.
- **Priority area 4** Development of pipelines for developing educator talent from diverse backgrounds. Advance careers of educators with nontraditional preparation. Increase diversity and effectiveness of the educator workforce.
- **Priority area 5** streamlined central office support for schools.
 - Extended student school year and school day. Supporting the empowered schools.

Dr. Caballero-Roca asked what is the plan to implement all these suggestions ? What are the departments or who will be involved in these suggestions? How will this be carried out ? How is that all going to be implemented?

Ms. Brunelle suggested we take the list Mr. Johnston presented and have this subcommittee come back with their points and suggestions. Ms. Brunelle asked If we have specific points we can study and bring back the talking points in the next local control subcommittee meeting.

Mr. Johnston loops back around and continues to focus on a strategic plan. Commissioner will send over the list as a follow up. IF there are areas within the States list we can provide a deeper explanation or more training if needed. What the district has set in motion will continue once in Local Control. With the exception of items that are not in the turnaround plan such as the Compensation Model and hours.

Ms. Brunelle expresses the compensation model is not specifically discussed in the turnaround plan, but teacher retention is so it is tied together in that way. Mr. Soto has been planning ahead and in the process of contract negotiations.

Dr. Caballero-Roca highlighted the need for support for paraprofessionals. They are the backbone of the schools and support for teachers throughout the district.

Ms. Brunelle listing Key Takeaways

- start a Working Google sheet .
- Share the upcoming meeting times with Mr. Johnston
- Review the list Acting Commissioner Johnston will provide and create feedback.

Motion to adjourn set by Dr.Caballero-Roca Seconded by Ms. Brunell. All in favor.

Motion to adjourn passes unanimously.

Adjournment 5:59 p.m.