



Dr. Juliette Pennyman, Superintendent of Schools

## **Board of Education Takes Steps to Provide Solutions for Two Land-Use Opportunities March 27, 2024**

Dear Hudson City School District Community,

The Hudson City School District Board of Education is pleased to update the community on two land-use solutions that are designed to benefit the City of Hudson and its residents.

**Closed School:** On Tuesday, the Board of Education voted to accept an offer to sell the former John L. Edwards Elementary School to the Hudson Development Corp., which envisions converting the property into a community hub providing childcare, youth services, educational and government services. The corporation's president, Christine Jones, provided the Board with a presentation on Tuesday, March 26, 2024, saying that community input has been vital in identifying potential uses for the building and property. A feasibility study was done in 2019 and prospective tenants have been approached to understand their needs, she said. The school, on State Street, was dedicated on Feb. 7, 1965 and served students until 2018. The next step would be the preparation of a formal sales contract for further review by the Board of Education.

**Mill Street Property:** In September 2023, the Board of Education shared information with the community regarding the City of Hudson's intent in using vacant land for affordable housing. The property under consideration was a portion of the former Charles S. Williams Memorial School property on Mill Street. The solution would bring additional affordable housing to the city.

The Board of Education voted on Feb. 27, 2024 to rescind a reverter in the land records that required the land to be used for "park and recreational purposes only." If the 3.2 acres were not used for those specified purposes, ownership of the land would return to the school district. This clause was put into the transaction records when the District gave the land to the City of Hudson in 1983. The land has been used for passive recreation since.

The Board of Education certainly agrees that the City of Hudson needs additional affordable housing. As such, it had directed its attorney last fall to discuss potential solutions with the City. Negotiations recently culminated with an agreement that the Board of Education would legally withdraw its "reverter" requirement, freeing the City to sell the property to a developer, the Kearney Realty & Development Group, which would build that affordable housing.

The New York State Constitution forbids public entities, such as cities and school districts, from giving gifts unless there is a public benefit. The City's sale of the property to the privately owned and operated developer does not qualify as a public benefit, so the land had to be sold for a fair market price. The



transaction price between the City and Kearney was \$272,000. The Hudson City School District will receive \$136,000 of that amount to account for its interest in the property and to defray anticipated school district costs of additional students expected to live in the new affordable housing units.

The Board of Education believes these solutions are in the best interests of the community and the children of the City of Hudson. The Board also thanks the community for its patience and its continued investment in our students' futures.

Sincerely,

The Hudson City School District Board of Education  
#HudsonTogetherWeCan