



HUDSON
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Dr. Juliette Pennyman, Superintendent of Schools

Hudson City School District Board of Education Presentations Focus on Social/Emotional Learning, Advanced Placement/College Partnerships and Special Education

The Hudson City School District's Board of Education was updated on how social/emotional learning approaches are taking root at all three schools during a meeting at Hudson High School on Tuesday, Nov. 19, 2024. The Board also heard presentations on Advanced Placement and college courses, and special education services.

The social/emotional learning approaches are known as RULER, an acronym for:

- Recognizing emotions in oneself and others through facial expressions, body language, voice and behavior.
- Understanding the causes and consequences of emotions in oneself and others.
- Labeling emotions with accurate words from a nuanced vocabulary.
- Expressing emotions differently depending on context, situational expectations, and culture.
- Regulating emotions with effective strategies and supporting others in their regulation of emotions.

Classrooms and schools that have implemented RULER report more positive educational environments, less bullying, increased attendance, fewer disciplinary incidents, improved academic achievement and more autonomy and leadership – all adding up to stronger connections between teachers and students. Leaders of each school provided presentations.

- **Montgomery C. Smith Elementary School:** Principal Mark Brenneman said RULER, in its third year at the school, helps students identify and regulate their emotions. He said the benefits have been clear, and teachers and staff participate as well. "This is something we have embraced at the elementary school over time," he said. "In the long run, this helps students solve conflict... we're seeing powerful moments emerge." RULER has four action tools:
 - The Charter builds and sustains a positive climate through a shared agreement between people about how they want to feel at work or while engaging in learning.
 - The Mood Meter, which has quadrants of red, yellow, blue and green, builds greater self and social awareness about emotions.
 - The Meta-Moment trains people to respond to emotional triggers in more effective ways that align with one's best self.
 - The Blueprint provides a structure to problem-solve interpersonal conflicts with empathy and perspective taking.

Christina Canarozzi-Van Slyke, a special education teacher, said the initiative "has made a huge difference.. My students walk into the classroom, sign into a quadrant on how they're feeling, and as the day goes on, we discuss our feelings." She said RULER notes the progression of students' feelings and how they recognize them, and, as a result, outbursts have decreased.

- **Hudson Junior High School:** Interim Principal Kenneth Behr said RULER is now being introduced, and the current focus is on faculty and staff training. "It's really important that everyone uses the same common language and thinking process," he said. The Mood Meter is being used in sixth grade, so it will be a familiar carryover from elementary school for students. An introduction for seventh and eighth graders will take place in the future, he said. "These are skills for life," Behr said. "If you can't regulate your emotions, you won't be successful."
- **Hudson Senior High School:** Principal Derek Reardon said the program is being rolled out over the course of this school year, starting with multi-step training. The completion of rollout will achieve an important district-wide goal, he said. "The big piece is consistency from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade."

Advanced Placement Honors and College Courses Presentation for Hudson Senior High School

Principal Derek Reardon and Counselor Vernon “Rocky” Paine provided an overview of these programs, based on the school district’s [Six Keys to School Improvement](#). Students’ participation is based on their interest level, a teacher recommendation and academic performance. Advanced Placement courses are beneficial because they bring national recognition to student achievement and make the students more competitive when they’re considered by colleges. Payne said a previous emphasis on college is now morphing into a focus on post-secondary plans. “Everyone has their own path,” he said. The District has two partnerships with local colleges, Columbia Greene Community College for a composition class, and an algebra class at SUNY Cobleskill. “Our students work hard and our teachers work hard to get them through,” Payne said.

Special Education Presentation

Director of Student Services Kim Carnegie said 303 students, or 18% districtwide, are recipients of special education. “Special education is a service, not a place,” she said, explaining how the district seeks to tailor services to students’ individual needs so they can best be educated.

The State Education Department, she said, provides a Blueprint for Improvement for special-education students:

- **Self-Advocacy:** Students engage in self-advocacy and self-determination.
- **Family Partnership:** Parents and other family members engage as partners.
- **Specially-Designed Instruction:** Teachers design, provide and assess the effectiveness of specially designed instruction.
- **Research-Based Instruction:** Teachers provide research-based instructional teaching and learning strategies and supports.
- **Multi-Tiered Support:** Schools provide multi-tiered systems of behavioral and academic support.
- **Inclusive Activities:** Schools provide high-quality inclusive programs.
- **Transition Support:** Schools provide instruction in career development and opportunities for work-based learning.

The specialized instruction, Carnegie said, includes instructional content; how instruction is delivered or the practices and approaches the teacher uses to teach; and where and when instruction is provided. Challenges can include students with specific disabilities, development, language or physical needs, as well as students with psychiatric or significant behavioral issues. Other concerns facing the program are a lack of providers, positions such as specialty teachers and aides that are hard to fill; and numerous school districts competing for a small number of openings in specialized programs.

Superintendent’s Report

During her Superintendent’s Report, Dr. Pennyman:

- Noted a range of classroom activities in observance of November’s Harvest of the Month, which is dairy from New York farms. This included serving yogurt cups and parfaits. A Farm to Table class, led by Food Service Director Lisa McGovern, made yogurt.
- Reported on her monthly Conversations With The Superintendent public forum, which on Nov. 14 was attended by several students. Separate discussions also were held with staff members. The next Conversations forum is on Thursday, Dec. 19 at 6 p.m. at the Hudson Youth Center, 18 S. Third St.
- Detailed a Nov. 13 visit by Brooks Gibb, Ph.D., who specializes in teaching youth how to be emotionally resilient and inspiring them to live by The Golden Rule. He spoke at all district schools and provided a presentation for faculty, staff and the community.
- Announced veterans’ appreciation events led by the Hudson High School Kindness Club, under the direction of Lisa Schmidt. The club teamed up with the High and Mighty Therapeutic Riding Center and the Columbia County Veterans Service Agency Dwyer Peer to Peer Program to hold the Fourth Annual Veterans Appreciation “Bagels at the Barn.” Participants included the Hudson Wind Ensemble, Life Skills students who provided tours and gifts, and a performance by the Hudson High School Band.

- Announced the successful Oct. 26 launch of the Flying Classroom Saturday STEM Pilot Program, during which a group of Hudson Junior and Senior High School students received hands-on science, technology, engineering and math lessons. Slots are available for interested students; contact your school principal.
- Presented her inaugural Superintendent's Spotlight on Excellence Award to "great community partners" Noah Kornbluh and Victor Sparano of Berkshire Bike & Board. They assembled bicycles for the district after the schools received a grant.

Other Actions

Elsewhere, the Board of Education also approved contracts and personnel items. Learn more by visiting <https://go.boarddocs.com/ny/hudsoncsd/Board.nsf/Public>. Click on the Nov. 19 Meeting Agenda and then click each item for details. View the meeting on the Hudson City School District's YouTube page at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HhRbCw6Ap-Y>.

Next Meeting

The next Board of Education meeting is Tuesday, Dec. 10 at 6 p.m. in the Hudson Junior Senior High School Auditorium. The meeting also can be viewed live, or on demand, on the YouTube page.