As a new member of a national consortium of Children Cabinets, Mayor Rolison, myself and other members of the Children’s Cabinet were invited to participate in The Education ReDesign Laboratory (Harvard University Graduate School of Education), Spring 2020 convening of By All Means. Other participants represented Stockton, CA; Somerville, MA; Salem MA; Providence RI; Oakland CA; Louisville KY; the state of Illinois; and Chattanooga-Hamilton County, TN.

This year’s convening centered on early childhood and cross-sector collaborations to support children and families during this time of uncertainty. Some of the conference workshops included "Innovation in Early Childhood Systems: Providing Comprehensive Supports From 0-5," "When School is Online: Addressing the Learning Needs of Our Most Vulnerable Students" and "How do we Build a Better America in the Wake of the Pandemic?"

Our participation in the virtual conference began Tuesday, May 19 and concluded Friday, May 22 with a debrief on what was learned and how we will apply these learnings to the important work of the Poughkeepsie Children’s Cabinet.

After students raised some concerns about being behind on work, PHS Principal Kelleyann Royce-Giron and her teachers worked out a plan to extend office hours so students would have an opportunity to catch-up. “After discussion with some of our students, many of whom have always been on track according to the expectations when we were in-house, and hours of reflection, I have decided to allow three days for students to catch up on their work while having the opportunity to reach out to their teachers during extended office hours,” Principal Royce-Giron said. Ms. Karabec, Ms. Martino and other members of the PHS team were in full support in providing this opportunity for our students.

Beginning Wednesday, May 20th, students had through Friday to catch up on their work, with no new assignments posted. In addition, they had extended access to their teachers for assistance.

This time gave teachers an opportunity to work with students individually or in small groups and also provided teachers time to grade assignments, provide feedback and plan for any final projects. Our goal is to make sure that our Pioneers are provided with the supports that they need to achieve the success they have worked so hard for.
Budget hearing set for Thursday

Last week, the Board of Education approved a $104,466,005 budget for the 2020-21 school year, a decrease of 0.65 percent over last year’s budget. As adopted, the budget is under the allowable tax cap and represents a 3.55 percent increase in the tax levy.

While updates on the construction of the budget have been shared with Board of Education and the community at every Board of Education meeting since March 19, 2020, a public hearing will be held Thursday May 28, 2020, at 5 p.m. Dr. Rosser, superintendent, and Mr. Hogan, interim chief operating officer will provide a comprehensive budget presentation linking the 2020-21 budget to the district’s strategic initiatives that were developed in response to what the Poughkeepsie community articulated as priorities for PCSD to transform into a quality educational institution for all students.

The presentation portion of the hearing will be about 45 minutes. The Q & A portion for the Budget Public Hearing will last an hour. Questions during the public hearing can be sent on the chat at the following YouTube link: https://youtu.be/dIP9PJemLoY the day of the meeting. Community members can also send questions in advance to btorres@poughkeepsieschools.org.

The newsletter should arrive in early June and will provide details on the budget. A digital version can be located here.

Meeting helps high school grads prep for collegiate athletics

Students recently had an opportunity to attend an NCAA Clearinghouse Information Session to help them prepare for collegiate athletics.

Hosted by Interim Director of Physical Education, Health Services, Athletics & Recreation Christian Hodge, the meeting covered initial eligibility for student-athletes for Division 1 and Division 2. It also covered COVID-19 updates for Fall eligibility.

I can recall my transition from high school to college and the excitement of transitioning into a post-secondary institution as a student athlete. I have fond memories and am certain that our student athletes will generate their own memories that will be cherished.

To learn more about the NCAA Clearinghouse click here.

Census open: Help everyone in the city get counted

While so much is occupying our thoughts and dictating our daily actions, it is important that we remain mindful of the 2020 Census. The 2020 Census is now open—and its results have deep impacts on the Poughkeepsie City Schools and the City of Poughkeepsie. Please make sure that you are COUNTED and that you are getting the word out about the census. As we engage in conversations with other members of our community, start your conversation with this “I’m Counted, Are You?” If they are not, please direct them to PCSD website to learn more and to complete the Census.