

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES March 9, 2016

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Susan Butler, Vice Chair (Acting Chair)
Mayanne Briggs
Steve Bilafer
Kevin Coughlin
Lisa Laprade
Rachel McGregor

MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:

Michael Welch, Superintendent
Cynthia Kelly, Assistant Superintendent
Samuel Rippin, Assistant Superintendent Business and Finance
Elizabeth O'Connell, Director of Special Education

Meeting location: The Avery School

Meeting commenced at 7:03 p.m.

Recognitions and Awards

Mr. Welch recognized Dedham Savings for its donation of \$4,108.50 for 225 Chromebook cases for the incoming sixth grade class. The cases will help to protect the Chromebooks which will be purchased as part of the 1:1 technology effort at the Middle School. Mr. Langenhorst thanked Peter Brown, President and CEO of Dedham Savings, who was present at the meeting, for his ongoing donations of Chromebook cases. Mr. Langenhorst displayed one of the cases to the committee. The covers are monogrammed with the Dedham logo.

Mrs. Briggs motioned to accept with grateful appreciation the \$4,108 donation from Dedham Savings for Chromebook cases, second by Mrs. Laprade, committee voted unanimously.

Mr. Welch recognized Karen MacKenzie and the following DHS students for the letters they wrote to the Joint Committee on Education regarding H422, An Act to establish the state seal of biliteracy. Each student received a letter of acknowledgment from Representative Paul McMurtry. Mrs. McKenzie explained how the students did extensive research on the topic before writing their letters. The following students were in attendance- Lude Meril (Senior), Johanna Torres (Junior), Neha Muskan (Sophomore), Kamela Pallani (Sophomore), Vilma Bonilla (Sophomore), Nana Adomako (Freshman), Serena Pallani (Freshman)

Mr. Welch and the School Committee thanked the students for their efforts and expressed encouragement to continue supporting and promoting biliteracy.

Student update by Kayla Haney

ECEC - Over the past few weeks, the staff, students and families of the ECEC participated in a *Coins for Flint* initiative. Early Childhood Evaluator Sarah Martin spearheaded the effort to collect spare change from students and families for the purpose of providing bottled water to the victims of the water crisis in Flint, Michigan. ECEC generosity resulted in the collection of roughly \$600 in coins and currency which was enough to purchase four pallets of bottled water to be sent to Michigan.

Oakdale- On Wednesday, March 2nd Oakdale School held its annual Celebrity Guest Readers day as part of Read Across America Day. Celebrities included- Assistant Superintendent Dr. Kelly; Director of Special Education Ms. O'Connell; Principals McCarthy, Paris and Paul Sullivan; Assistant Principal Forrest; Fire Chief Spillane and Police Chief D'Entremont; State Representative McMurty.

All of the elementary schools participated in the Folk Dance night on Thursday, March 4th. This year the event was held at Oakdale school. There was a great turnout of more than 80 families who came to enjoy various folk dances. This evening was organized by elementary music teachers Heather Kirby, Sara Allen and Gabby Zimbaro. Special thanks went to Jeff Bolduc and the elementary principals for attending and joining in the dances.

Avery - On Wednesday, March 2nd Avery School celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday and Read Across America Day with an assembly emceed by the Student Council. Students were encouraged to dress up as their favorite storybook character. Nurse Sheila Bennett and school secretary Mrs. Gianopolous entertained the students with a reading of the Elephant and Piggy book, *We Are in a Book*. On Saturday, the Avery PTO sponsored the Discover Summer Camp Fair. Parents and children were able to meet with representatives from over 50 summer day and overnight programs for kids from preschool to high school. The guidebook is posted on the Avery School website.

Greenlodge - On Friday, March 11, the Greenlodge School will be hosting its annual Variety Show. Over 22 student acts ranging from instrumental showcases to gymnastics demonstrations to song and dance acts will entertain the parents and community members.

Riverdale - Last Wednesday, Riverdale School celebrated Read Across America Day and Dr. Seuss's birthday by encouraging students to dress as their favorite book character. Mr. Paris read *The Sneetches* at lunch over the intercom and after recess the entire school had a "reading train" during which all students and staff went into the hallway to read silently for ten minutes. On Friday, author and illustrator Kory Merritt is coming to speak with the second and third grade about his career path and how he creates his work. Merritt is being brought to the school through the generosity of Blue Bunny Bookstore.

DMS - Visits from the guidance department to grade 5 classrooms concluded today. Ms. Gately is hosting a coffee hour at 7:00 am tomorrow, Thursday, March 10. DMS students will be attending the production of *Cinderella* at DHS on Thursday, March 10. There will be a dance on Friday, March 11 for grades 7 & 8. The dance is co-sponsored dance by the DMS Leadership Team and the Student Council. An information night on Special Education programs at the Middle School for incoming grade 6 families will be held on March 15 at 6 pm. March 15 is also a fundraising night at Papa Ginos for the DMS trip to DC. 15% of sales will be donated to the trip. March 16 from 4-7pm is the 3v3 basketball fundraiser at the Middle School.

DHS- Parent Conferences were held last night. The Drama Club performed 4:00 a.m. at the Massachusetts Educational Theater Guild's Drama Festival on Saturday, February 27. Michael Curvin and Caroline Alexandre won awards for "excellence in acting" for their performances. The girls' basketball, boys' basketball, and boys' ice hockey teams made the MIAA Tournament this year. Spring Sports start on March 21. All student athletes must register online and have an updated physical by March 16. Eric Reyes won his second New England wrestling title. The Marauder wrestling team finished fourteenth in the All State Massachusetts Wrestling Rankings. The Annual Senior Musical *Cinderella* takes place on Friday and Saturday nights. Both performances will start at 7:00 p.m. in the DHS Auditorium. The DHS Parent Connection and Dedham Educational Partnership will co-sponsor a Speaker Night on Wednesday, March 16. The evening will start with dinner at 6:00 p.m. in the DHS cafeteria followed by presentations from Nancy Holler and Jon Mattleman. All parents with children in Dedham are invited. Please check the DHS website for more details. The Senior Snowball is Friday, March 18 at the Victory Grill in Dedham from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The Sophomore Semi-Formal is Friday, March 18 at the Endicott House from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Superintendent's Update

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Cynthia Kelly Update

- On February 29 the Professional Development team under direction of Linda Kobierski reviewed with teachers at each school how to upload evidence to Teachpoint. This evidence will be used to support teacher evaluations. A podcast was recorded by Greenlodge teacher Ken Toomey
- Dr. Kelly read at Greenlodge and Oakdale schools as part of Read Across America Day
- The Greenlodge Principal search is in the interview phase. The committee is planning to recommend 3-5 candidates

Superintendent Michael J. Welch Update

- The new online registration process for new students is proceeding and will hopefully be piloted at the ECEC this Spring. Mr. Welch thanked Mike Dewar and the technology team for all of their diligent work.
- Mr. Welch thanked Mrs. O'Connell and SEPAC who sponsored an anti-bullying panel last night at DMS.
- The third district fundraising meeting was held on March 1. The point of the meeting is to coordinate fundraising efforts and share information throughout the district. Athletic Director, Steve Traister and groups who support Dedham athletics presented. Friends of Dedham Music will present at the next meeting.
- The Athletic Director will make a presentation at the March 23 School Committee Meeting. Mr. Traister will discuss his efforts and findings on opportunities other leagues have to offer to Dedham athletics
- The first Leadership and Blended and Digital Learning Lab was held at DMS. Over 50 principals, superintendents and central office staff from other districts attended. This is an opportunity for Dedham to lead the way in blended learning. The next meeting will be held on May 2. Mr. Welch thanked Dr. Langenhorst for all of his work on this event.
- Negotiations are currently ongoing with Paraprofessionals. Mr. Welch mentioned to the Committee that he will be asking for members to participate at upcoming meetings.

- Mr. Welch has completed his state of the school addresses. He has visited all seven schools and discussed the budget process with the staff

Mr. Samuel Rippin, Business and Finance Update

- The town has purchased Munis financial accounting system and plans to go live on July 1. Mr. Rippin thanked Lina Sun, DPS accountant, for attending the meetings pertaining to the new system. There will be a need to train all clerical staff and principals
- Under a grant from cable money, the Board of Selectman approved \$90,000 for new projection and sound systems which have been installed at Avery, DMS and DHS
- Mr. Welch passed out data from the MSBA with the breakdown of eligible and non-eligible portions of funding for the new ECEC. The MSBA Board Meeting to approve grant money to fund the proposed project will be held on March 30. The vote to approve town funding will be taken at Town Meeting on May 16. The vote requires a 2/3 majority to pass
- Mr. Welch spoke about his professional goal of meeting every senior before the end of the school year. He invites eight students at a time for a meeting to discuss their Dedham Public School experience. At this time he is about 2/3 of the way through the senior class
- Mr. Welch met with committee chairs today to review potential professional development opportunities the last week of the school year (after the last day of school). Mr. Welch and Dr. Kelly reviewed the importance of professional development for the teaching staff to upgrade skills as well as to earn professional development points for license renewal

Reports

Curriculum Review

- "C" of CAPD- Beth Sawyer (Chair of Committee) and Clare Sullivan presenting
- Teachers and administrators from across the district have been working for the past year to research, define, and develop the curriculum review cycle and to begin work on the ELA curriculum review
- Committee Members-James Forrest (HS Assistant Principal), Andrew Morton (Social Studies Dept. Head 6-12), Jeffrey Bolduc (District Fine Arts Director), Amy Muldoon (Special Education Director 6-12), Karen MacKenzie Sleeman (ELL Teacher-HS), Shannon Findley (Reading Specialist-Riverdale), Lauren Patts (Grade 1 Teacher-Greenlodge), Lisa Magnacca (Grade 4 Teacher-Greenlodge), Stacey Cawley (Grade 3 Teacher-Oakdale), Michelle Delahanty (Grade 5 Teacher-Avery), Jessica Crowley (Grade 3 Teacher-Greenlodge), Julia Ridgway (Grade 5 Teacher-Greenlodge), Mary MacLean (Grade 1 Teacher-Avery), Heidi Dineen-Serpis (Grade 3 Teacher-Avery), Maureen Tannetta (Library Specialist-Greenlodge), Colleen Fitzgerald (ELL-Riverdale), Kerrin O'Brien (Grade 2 Teacher-Oakdale), Carol Margolis (English Teacher-HS), Mollie Young (English Teacher-HS), Nina Mancinelli (Reading Specialist-Oakdale), Julie Lally (Kindergarten Teacher-ECEC), Jenna Caldwell (Special Education-MS), Eileen Ryan (Special Education -MS), Doreen Ward (Grade 1 Teacher-Oakdale)
- The Curriculum Committee researched multiple other districts to review their curriculum review cycles
- The Committee has embarked on a district wide 5 year review process
- 4 phase review cycle-
 - Phase I, Year 1- Collect data and analyze the current curriculum
 - Phase II, Years 2-5- Redesign and update the existing curriculum

- Phase III, Years 3-5- Implement the newly designed curriculum
 - Phase IV, Year 5- Evaluate the newly devised curriculum
- Currently the committee has met three goals- defined the curriculum review purpose and process; developed and organized the Phase 1 documents for collect and sharing information on the current curricula; initiated the ELA curriculum review
- ELA Review-
 - Curriculum committee members are meeting with colleagues in the district to identify and document the current ELA curriculum from grades preK - 12 on the Phase I documents
 - All documentation is centrally located in the Master Curriculum Review Folder on Google Drive to allow staff across the district the ability to view, comment on, or edit the documents as the review proceeds
 - Special Education and ELL teachers and administrators are collaborating with the ELA review committee to review and revise the current curriculum to ensure differentiated instruction that meets the needs of all students
- Next Steps- Continue documentation of the current ELA curriculum; summer work to continue the review of Phase I documentation and revise the curriculum for English Language Arts for the district; review and refinement of the Phase I process as other content areas begin their review cycles
- Mr. Welch asked Mrs. Sullivan to describe the Elementary Curriculum Coordinator position that used to exist in the district nine years ago. The purpose of the position was to cohesively keep all of the elementary schools on the same curriculum. Mrs. Sullivan was the last person to hold the position before it was cut from the budget. Mr. Welch discussed the impact of this budget cut to the ELA curriculum over the years
- Mr. Welch also spoke about the professional development consultant, Teachers 21, which has made a proposal to complete an outside audit of the ELA curriculum from grades K through 12
- Discussion and questions from the School Committee followed.

Old/New Business

FY17 Budget process Update

- Last night Mr. Welch presented the operating budget to the Finance Committee. The School Committee has approved a \$39,998,771 budget for FY17. The Town Manager's budget includes 4 full time employees, it does not include 5.6 full time employees from original budget presentation
- Mr. Bilafer made a statement supporting the budget that was presented and is encouraging the School Committee members to jointly write a letter to the Finance Committee expressing their support of the budget as it was presented
- Mrs. Briggs voiced her concern about a school psychologist position being excluded and the impact the cut would have on students with special needs
- Liza O'Connell spoke about unfunded and underfunded state mandates. She discussed the transition of special education students and the mandates to support them until their 22nd birthday. In essence DPS is responsible for Special Education programs for students age three through twenty-one
- Mr. Welch described the Early Intervention process and how students enter our Early Childhood Education Center throughout the year, noting that the district is responsible for

- specialized services beginning on a child's third birthday. He expressed concern over the current facility being able to properly serve these young students
- Further discussion ensued around other special education positions being cut from the proposed budget
 - Mr. Coughlin complimented Mr. Welch on an outstanding budget presentation to the Finance Committee the previous evening
 - Mr. Rippin discussed how the school facilities budget has constraints based on the town facilities budget
 - Ms. Butler concurred that a letter should be written to the Finance Committee in support of the presented budget and a meeting with the Town Manager is warranted
 - The committee members gave many thanks to Budget Subcommittee for all of their hard work on producing the FY17 budget

Minutes

Mrs. Briggs motioned to approve the minutes of February 24, 2016 as presented, Mrs. McGregor second, committee voted unanimously.

Donations

Mrs. Laprade motioned to accept with grateful appreciation a \$1,200 donation from Dedham Junior Women's Club to support the Dedham Public School Libraries, second by Mrs. McGregor, committee voted unanimously.

Public Comments

None

Acknowledgements and Announcements

Mr. Welch announced that the 2nd Annual Boosters Club trivia night is on March 19 and is sold out.

Ms. Butler announced that the senior play *Cinderella* is this weekend at the Dedham High School auditorium.

Mr. Coughlin motioned to adjourn the meeting, Mrs. Laprade second, committee voted unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m.