

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES December 14, 2016

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Susan Butler, Chair
Mayanne Briggs, Vice-Chair
Steve Bilafer
Kevin Coughlin
Lisa Laprade
Tom Ryan
Tracey White

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ABSENT:

None

MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:

Michael Welch, Superintendent
Ian Kelly, Assistant Superintendent
Samuel Rippin, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Finance

Meeting Location: Avery Elementary School

Meeting commenced at 7:00 p.m.

Recognitions

Music Performance

Many fifth grade students from the Avery and Oakdale Schools performed holiday songs for the Committee under the direction of Music teacher Sara Allen. Ms. Allen made special mention of four students who are part of the MMEA All State Treble Choir who will be performing at the All State Conference in March - Giovanna Lowney, Susie Plunkett, Vanessa Pugliesi and Kathleen Tocci.

Fine Arts/Music Teachers

Seven high school students performed two songs under the direction of new Music teacher, Nate Haywood. Mr. Haywood made special note of Christian Villard who will be representing Dedham High School in the MMEA Senior District Festival Choir.

Mr. Bolduc introduced the new Arts teacher, Courtney Teixeira. Ms. Teixeira spoke briefly about the enthusiasm she has encountered with her students here in Dedham and the Visual Art programs.

Mr. Bolduc introduced Jeff Daniels, the Music instructor at the Middle School and the Director of the Dedham High School marching band. Mr. Daniels highlighted marching band and the DMS orchestra activities.

Mr. Bolduc publicly acknowledged Arlene Tracey, the Middle School Art teacher, who has an afterschool program that partners students with residents at Newbridge.

Mr. Bolduc made note of the Instrument Drive. Instrument donations can be dropped off at Dedham Middle School or at the Dedham Community House, Dedham School of Music. Mr. Bolduc briefly spoke of the partnership between the schools and the Dedham School of Music. Scholarships from DPS have allowed students who would not have the financial opportunity to do so the opportunity to play musical instruments.

Supt Welch stated he would like to have Music be part of every student's school day.

Supt. Welch asked Mr. Bolduc about the capacity of the Fine Arts programs at DHS. Mr. Bolduc replied that, with the hiring of Ms. Teixeira, they are able to accommodate all students who wanted to take art this year. However, the Photography class was at capacity and some students were turned away from that particular course.

Donations in Memory of Debra Downs

The family of longtime resident Debra Downs asked friends and family to make donations in her memory to the Dedham Public Schools upon her passing. Due to Mrs. Downs' love of music, all funds donated in her memory will be allocated to the Music Department. Mrs. Downs' son Matthew was in attendance and was recognized for the donations.

Ms. White motioned to accept with grateful appreciation the donations in the memory Debra Downs to the Music Department, Mr. Coughlin second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Student Update

Evan Landry updated the School Committee on happenings throughout the Dedham Public Schools. Events included many holiday concerts, performances and Chorus appearances; spirit weeks; student council activities; and parent/teacher conferences. A special thank you went out to the Dedham Education Foundation for their grant allowing all second grade students the opportunity to see a performance of the “Nutcracker” in Norwood.

Public Comment

None

Superintendent's Update

Superintendent Michael J. Welch

Supt. Welch invited the audience to the “State of the Schools Address” on January 11 at Dedham Middle School at 6:30pm to learn more about the Dedham Public Schools Improvement Plan. He also encouraged people to go to the DPS website and view the Teachers21 Audit 2016, Special Education Program Evaluation 2013, School Committee Goals, and 2020 Strategic Objectives Improvement Plan.

The District Leadership Team met at the Oakdale Elementary School today to conduct the second Instructional Rounds session of the year. Principals and administrators visited each of the classrooms and reported back observations around the concept of student engagement.

Discussions are ongoing regarding FY18 operating budget requests. Assistant Superintendent Sam Rippin will begin assembling these requests and preparing FY18 projections in preparation for a presentation to the School Committee in January.

On December 7, Supt. Welch attended a bidder’s conference on the site of the new ECEC at the former Dexter Elementary School. The bids will be reviewed over the next few weeks and demolition of the existing structure will begin near the end of January.

Supt. Welch has continued to meet with groups of seniors as a part of his “Senior Interview” initiative. He meets with small groups of seniors to discuss their overall experiences in the Dedham Public Schools. It is his personal goal to meet with every senior before graduation.

The High School Leadership Team has met internally with our Special Education leadership to discuss the job descriptions and complete the selection process for the positions approved by Fall Town Meeting. The additional 0.5 FTE nurse is on board and working to complete SBIRT

reviews at DHS and DMS, while postings for the 1.0 FTE Career Counselor and 0.6 FTE Psychologist will be made shortly.

On December 9, Supt. Welch met with Police Chief Mike D'Entremont, Fire Chief Bill Spillane, Denise Moroney, Sam Rippin, Public Safety Technology Officer Kevin Coleman and School Technology Director Don Langenhorst. This was the third meeting of a group focused on long-range planning for the integration of technology infrastructure between public safety and the schools. Mr. Coleman has acquired high quality two-way radios that will be distributed to each of the schools for use by the principals.

Supt. Welch has received a series of comments from parents and community members regarding the preliminary DRAFT of the 2017-2018 School Year Calendar. These comments have been placed in the Committee's folder.

The second 30-Day Superintendent's Update was issued on December 6, the 60th day of school. The Dedham Planning Board met on December 8 to continue hearing information about traffic and the approval process for off-site traffic mitigation at the site of the new ECEC at the former Dexter School. The next Planning Board meeting is scheduled for January 12.

Representatives from the Massachusetts School Building Authority visited Greenlodge, Oakdale, and Riverdale Elementary Schools for the purpose of evaluating these buildings and rating their relative need for renovation or replacement. This is part of a larger statewide initiative to rank all schools in the Commonwealth so that the MSBA can appropriately allocate their resources over the course of the next decade. The last time such a comprehensive review was conducted was ten years ago (2006).

Today Supt. Welch attended the Tri-County Superintendents' Roundtable. The primary topic was a presentation by Rick Rogers, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Elementary School Principals Association (MESPA). In addition, there was a discussion about SRSD (Self-Regulated Strategy Development). This is an evidence-based writing instruction model.

Today Supt. Welch attended the Urban Superintendents' meeting and was fortunate to brainstorm with other superintendents from around the state regarding the ongoing challenges associated with districts that are not large enough to be recognized as urban districts but continue to have ongoing urban-like challenges.

Ms. Butler thanked Kevin Coleman for his assistance in obtaining the two-way radios for the school department.

Reports

Curriculum Update - Dr. Ian Kelly

Dr. Kelly updated the Committee on the current status of the ELA audit and curriculum instruction. His presentation will be available on the DPS website. The presentation focused on the implementation of the 'Foundations' (Phonics) Program in grades K through 2; Dr. Kelly's grade level conversations at each of the elementary schools; Dr. Kelly's findings from those meetings and the next steps and timeline.

Dr. Kelly prepared a detailed MCAS testing schedule that will be available on the DPS website.

Comments and questions from the Committee followed.

Ms. Laprade asked Dr. Kelly to define "curriculum". Dr. Kelly explained curriculum to be those concepts and skills children are expected to know and be able to accomplish at the end of a school year; the standards.

Ms. Laprade made mention of Pinterest as an educational resource. Dr. Kelly did not mind teachers looking at other resources but did not want teachers spending their own money. Dr. Kelly feels the district should provide teachers with the tools they need to implement the curriculum.

Ms. Laprade asked Dr. Kelly what he felt was the biggest thing the district is lacking. Dr. Kelly feels the district needs to clearly define the curriculum to teachers. The curriculum is the backbone of the system.

Mr. Bilafer asked Dr. Kelly how the conversations he had with the teachers compared to the Teachers21 audit. Dr. Kelly's findings were consistent with the audit. However, the teachers were able to provide a more detailed perspective. Professional Development needs to focus on differentiation in the classroom.

Ms. White inquired to the response of the teachers during the meetings. Dr. Kelly noted the teachers were welcoming, honest, direct and engaged.

Ms. White also inquired about the timeline. Dr. Kelly stated that some of the materials will be in the teachers' hands by the end of January.

Mr. Coughlin began a discussion regarding the amount of support teachers have had in the past. Dr. Kelly and Supt. Welch both commented that the teachers are hard working and committed to the students. The teachers do need more support and coordination so they can redirect their time and attention back to the classroom. The district needs to collaborate and work as a team.

Mr. Ryan noted that Dedham is not the only community repositioning resources within the district. Other districts are also dealing with ways to comply with state mandates.

Ms. Briggs agreed with Mr. Ryan's statement.

Ms. Butler thanked the classroom teachers for their efforts in collaborating with the audit and their work with Dr. Kelly. The Committee is committed to ensuring that the level of instruction is equitable across the district. She also stated the Committee is taking every opportunity to move ahead and looks forward to more updates from Dr. Kelly.

Athletics Fall Season & Tri-Valley League Update

Steve Traister presented the Fall Athletics Review. The presentation will be available on the DPS website. Over 50 percent of DHS students played a fall sport. Mr. Traister reviewed the number of students in each fall sport; accomplishments of teams as well as individuals; and win/loss records. Mr. Traister also reviewed participation numbers for each winter sport.

The first Tri-Valley League meeting on will be on December 15.

Dedham Athletics has invited the youth group boards and leaders to a dinner on January 12 to try to bridge the gap between DHS athletics and youth programs.

Supt. Welch feels the move to the Tri-Valley League is best for Dedham because it will provide a more competitive environment.

Mr. Bilafer supports the coordination with the youth leagues and would like to see more varsity players become mentors to younger players. He is aware this is already happening in hockey.

Ms. White asked for an explanation of the difference between the fall and winter sports in the Bay State League vs. the Tri-Valley League. The Tri-Valley League does not have a girls' hockey league; the towns play in co-op games. Tri-Valley does have girls' gymnastics and boys' volleyball.

Ms. Laprade asked for the name of the new hockey coach. Mr. Traister announced that his name is Dan Lynch. He also noted that in the spring he would be looking to hire a girls' lacrosse coach and a girls' softball coach.

Ms. Butler began a discussion around fundraising for equipment. There is no funding in the budget for uniforms. Dedham relies on the Booster Club Decal Drive to help defer the cost of uniforms. Ms. Butler would like to see more budget funds go toward uniforms to help relieve fundraising efforts as well as hardships on parents. Mr. Rippin noted he is trying to allocate money for this purpose.

Mr. Bilafer stated he would like to see more consistency around the purchasing of helmets across all sports.

Ms. Briggs attended a recent Alumni meeting where a discussion took place about creating equity across all sports.

Mr. Traister noted that Dedham has some of the lowest athletic fees in the league.

Old/New Business

Continued Preliminary FY18 Budget Discussions

Mr. Rippin updated the Committee regarding ongoing budget discussions. He has received a memo from the Town with respect to timelines for the operating and capital budgets. On December 19, the capital budget sheets will be delivered to the Director of Finance. The numbers will be combined with the Town's budget and presented to the Finance Committee in January. Mr. Rippin and the Budget Subcommittee have begun work on the operating budget. Mr. Rippin noted that he was hoping to meet with the FinCom in order to make sure all expectations were being met by the School Department.

Capital Budget Discussion and Vote

Mr. Bilafer stated that the budget subcommittee has completed review of the capital budget which is split between technologies and facilities. The full Committee has been presented with the budget books. Denise Moroney and Don Langenhorst were in the audience and available to answer any questions.

Ms. Butler inquired as to whether the school was working in conjunction with Joe Flanagan on any of the projects. Ms. Moroney answered that any asphalt projects and ADA prep work will be done with Mr. Flanagan. Ms. Butler also noted that it may be helpful to reach out to the Commission on Disabilities. They may be willing to contribute to ADA projects.

Supt. Welch mentioned that Mr. Rippin was hoping to purchase a multifunction activity bus to help reduce transportation costs.

Mr. Bilafer also noted that many of the updates in the capital budget are energy efficient improvements (windows, HVAC, doors).

Mr. Bilafer motioned to accept the FY18 Capital Budget as presented, Ms. Laprade second; Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Continued 2017-2018 Calendar Discussion

Supt. Welch has received several comments from the community regarding the proposed 2017-2018 calendar. He has shared these comments with the Committee and will continue reviewing the calendar until it is voted.

Ms. Briggs noted that two of the comments revolved around suggestions of discontinuing February and April vacations and replacing them with a week in March. Ms. Briggs inquired

whether any other districts offer this variation. The board was unaware of any other town using this schedule.

Third Reading of the Naloxone/Narcan Policy

Ms. Laprade offered the third reading of the DPS Naloxone/Narcan Policy.

The Overdose Education and Naloxone distribution prevention program under the direction of the Mass Department of Health says the schools must provide and maintain Naloxone for the school nurses to administer to a student, staff member or visitor of the school suspected of having an opioid overdose while on school property. The policy and procedure describes the signs and symptoms of an opioid overdose. There is then a carefully laid out sequential set of procedures which state that emergency medical response such as calling 911 must be initiated, then a careful health assessment of the suspected overdose victim performed followed by a set of detailed Naloxone administration directions to the victim if warranted pending the health assessment results. The policy and procedure also describes the potential victim's reaction as well as adverse effects. It is then stated that the victim must be transported to the nearest hospital by EMS. Student support services will be notified if the victim was a student and substance prevention resources will be provided to the student and family as appropriate. An incident report must be filled out in all cases. This policy and procedure then goes on to describe the necessary training for administration, procurement, storage and disposal of Naloxone.

A full draft of the policy is available on the DPS website.

Discussion and Vote of the Naloxone/Narcan Policy

Ms. Laprade stated that the Policy Subcommittee had voted to recommend the full School Committee vote to adopt the Naloxone/Narcan Policy.

Ms. Laprade made a motion to vote on adopting the Naloxone/Narcan Policy, Ms. Briggs second; Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Ms. Briggs motioned to accept the Naloxone/Narcan policy as stated, Ms. Laprade second; Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Minutes

Ms. White motioned to approve the minutes of November 16, 2016 as presented, Mr. Coughlin second, the Committee voted 6-0 in favor. Mr. Bilafer abstained since he was not in attendance at the meeting on November 16.

Ms. Briggs motioned to approve the minutes of November 30, 2016 as presented, Ms. White second, the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Donations

Ms. Briggs motioned to accept with grateful appreciation a \$1,000 donation from an anonymous benefactor to support the Dedham Middle School drama department, Ms. Laprade second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Ms. Briggs motioned to accept with grateful appreciation a \$1,000 donation from an anonymous benefactor to support the Dedham Middle School instrumental music department, Ms. Laprade second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Ms. Briggs motioned to accept with grateful appreciation a \$3,600 grant donated from the Dedham Library Innovation Team in support of MakerSpace activities for the school libraries, Ms. White second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Mr. Bilafer motioned to accept with grateful appreciation a \$457 donation from Five Guys Burgers and Fries to support the Dedham Middle School scholarship fund for the class trip to Washington, D.C., Ms. White second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Ms. Briggs motioned to accept with grateful appreciation a \$100 donation from Lueders Environmental to support the Dedham Public Schools, Ms. White second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Acknowledgements and Announcements

Ms. Butler announced that on January 11, 2017 the “State of the Schools” address would be at the Dedham Middle School at 6:30pm.

Executive Session

Ms. Briggs motioned to enter Executive Session under Article 3; Ms. Laprade second, a roll call vote was taken:

Susan Butler, Chair- Yes
Kevin Coughlin- Yes
Tracey White- Yes
Tom Ryan - Yes

Mayanne Briggs, Vice-Chair- Yes
Lisa Laprade- Yes
Steve Bilafer – Yes

Ms. Butler announced the Committee would not be returning following Executive Session.

Public Session Concluded: 9:48 p.m.