

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES **February 1, 2017**

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENT:

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

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.

Student Update

Kayla Haney updated the School Committee on happenings throughout the Dedham Public Schools. Events included Jump Rope for Heart for the American Heart Association, 100th day of school activities, Patriots' Spirit Day and the DHS Open House for 8th grade students and parents.

Superintendent's Update

Superintendent Michael J. Welch

Supt. Welch sent out his most recent version of the "Superintendent's 30-Day Update"

During the week of January 23, the Town of Dedham and the Dedham Public Schools experienced at least four power outages in various schools.

Supt. Welch met with representatives from the early literacy consultant organization, Lectio and teachers from ECEC on January 27. Dedham will send an eight-person team to attend an annual institute in Cambridge to look at the overall approach to literacy acquisition with earliest learners.

The district has hired four Title 1 Interventionists who have been deployed to the four elementary schools beginning today.

The School Department presented the FY18 Capital Budget request to the Capital Expenditures Committee (CEC) on Monday, January 23.

Supt. Welch attended the Tri-County Superintendents' Meeting on January 25. He heard about a new program called "LEAP" (Leadership, Empowerment, Awareness, Protection) to better integrate school resource officers into the schools through the use of targeted curriculum at both the elementary and secondary levels.

Supt. Welch spent the entire day at Dedham Middle School on January 26 to listen to input from DMS faculty regarding the upcoming district restructuring

Supt. Welch attended the New Superintendents' Induction Program Regional Consultancy on January 27 at the Randolph Public Schools. He met with four other superintendents to learn about their programs and discuss budgets and vision.

On January 27, Supt. Welch met with Dedham Town Manager Jim Kern to discuss ongoing issues related to town and school finances.

The school department is currently working on the next stage of our "4-I's" (Information Integration for Instructional Improvement) project. This stage requires a linkage of our district staff data through the newly implemented MUNIS financial management software through the Town.

The first meeting of the DMS principal search occurred on January 27.

Supt. Welch met with members of the DEF on January 30 to discuss ongoing ways to partner and promote their fundraising efforts with the school department.

The administration held the first of four "Impact Bargaining" negotiations with the DEA on January 30. The next impact bargaining session is scheduled for February 13.

Supt. Welch met with Police Chief Mike D'Entremont, Nurse Leader Gail Kelley, and numerous other interested community members as part of our ongoing Community Crisis Intervention Team. We heard from our INTERFACE service representative and received data on usage.

Supt. Welch is continuing to conduct mid-year reviews with all central staff and principals.

Supt. Welch and Don Langenhorst will be attending the "LearnLaunch Across Boundaries" technology conference in Boston this Thursday and Friday.

Dedham High School will be hosting an exclusive showing of the movie SCREENAGERS on Tuesday, April 11 in the auditorium.

Supt. Welch reminded the Committee that the date for the community meeting hosted by the SBRC regarding upcoming work at the former Dexter Elementary School has been changed to February 7.

Supt. Welch was invited to participate on a panel discussing “The Faces of Poverty - Urban, Rural, Suburban” on March 10 sponsored by the Massachusetts Association of School Committees and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents at Clark University.

Reports

Curriculum Update - Dr. Ian Kelly

Dr. Ian Kelly provided the committee a curriculum review update. The presentation will be available on the DPS website. The presentation includes goals of the curriculum review process as well as an update on PreK-5 meetings.

Elizabeth Sawyer, DHS English Chair for grades 6-12, discussed the work of the ELA Curriculum Review Committee. She noted that the work has been broken down into 5 phases. Phase 1 was a breakdown of what was currently occurring in each grade by each teacher. Phase 2 is setting goals for what can be done differently. Phase 2 will continue through the 2016-17 school year and into the summer. Summer work will include building new units and lessons that align with the standards. Dr. Kelly has already developed a curriculum map for standards.

Mr. Coughlin inquired on new elected courses. Ms. Sawyer stated the Creative Writing and Evaluating media have been added to the curriculum.

Ms. White inquired on how the department was determining what was working. Ms. Sawyer stated that they were using both assessments and student engagement.

Ms. White inquired to Mr. Rippin if the Business Dept. was going to help by providing textbooks. Mr. Rippin said there was an increase to the budget for system wide textbooks.

Mr. Ryan noted he would like to see writing embedded into the curriculum throughout the year instead of waiting until June.

Dr. Kelly stated that writing is being stressed as part of the entire curriculum. He is looking at maps horizontally to make sure reading and writing are being implemented throughout the school year.

Ms. Briggs inquired about the Foundations Program and how it relates to writing. Dr. Kelly explained the fundamentals of Foundations and how the breaking down of words will allow students to become better writers.

Ms. Butler inquired on what improvements have been made over the past year at DMS and DHS. Ms. Sawyer explained how emphasis has been placed on building students stamina in relation to writing as well as the teaching of grammar has been integrated into the writing process. Ms. Sawyer explained stamina as a better understanding of what a question is asking as well as the writing process. It is giving students varied opportunities in writing as well as conversing about the subject matter.

Ms. Butler inquired about culturally diverse authors. Ms. Sawyer explained how the summer reading has been changed to include more authors as well as asking students to take a survey regarding reading opportunities.

Ms. Butler inquired about work with Lectio for grades PK-5. Dr. Kelly responded that the work with Lectio will be integrated into the elementary level.

Old/New Business

Discussion and Vote on FY18 Operating Budget

Mr. Bilafer, the Budget Subcommittee Chair, announced there was a hearing last week regarding FY18. He asked the Committee if there were any further questions. The Committee did not have any additional questions.

Mr. Bilafer motioned to approve the FY18 Operating Budget of \$37,493,652, Ms. Briggs second; Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Mr. Bilafer motioned to approve the FY18 Facilities Budget of \$3,790,854, Ms Briggs second; Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Continued Discussion on District Strategic Improvement and Restructuring Plan

Supt. Welch stated that the first impact bargaining had occurred and he has had ongoing conversations with staff.

Ms. White inquired as to what will be put in place of the reading block at DMS and will there be changes to the schedule. Supt. Welch wants to focus on what will improve student learning. Middle School Principal, Dr. Fraczek, has received an initial proposal from the DMS scheduling committee. Some suggested changes include a rotating schedule from day to day, a concept of a flex block giving students a choice of subject such as music, art, technology, or extra help. The Committee's next step is to prepare an outline.

Ms. Laprade inquired into leveled reading groups and the new teaching model. Supt. Welch reviewed tiered intervention and noted that students who need supplemental instruction from RTI will receive additional support.

Ms. Laprade inquired whether the coaches would be working with students. Supt. Welch explained that part of the role of coach will be working in the classroom along with the teacher and part of the role will be working with the teachers separately. Learning Forward has been contracted to make sure all coaches have proper training.

Ms. Laprade inquired about students who are struggling with reading at the Middle School level and what are they going to do without a reading block. Supt. Welch stated that a flex block would give students the opportunity to get help during that time.

Ms. Laprade suggested that now teachers are going to have to work within new guidelines and they are losing the support of the reading and math specialists. She expressed concern that this may be overwhelming to the teachers. Supt. Welch stated that he wants to give the teachers the resources to meet their needs. Coaches will provide this additional support.

Ms. Laprade inquired about students who need executive functioning training. Supt. Welch stated that the technology department and the library media specialists are providing support and instruction to students in this area. A flex period could allow for extra support in this area.

Ms. White inquired about providing parents the opportunity in this same area. Supt. Welch talked about screencasts and how they might be helpful to parents.

Mr. Coughlin asked what other communities use using instructional coaches. Supt. Welch cited Needham, Newton, and Winchester as a few.

Ms. Butler asked Mr. Welch if he has been able to guide any of the staff. Supt. Welch said that several of the Teaching Assistant's are becoming Title 1 teachers. He is continuing talks with reading and math specialists.

Continued 2017-2018 School Calendar Discussion

Ms. Laprade noted that next year's school calendar was discussed at the earlier policy subcommittee. A parent survey was created by the Superintendent's Office, but the Committee is recommending not sending it out at this time. Per Ms. Laprade, the Committee is not in a position to make certain changes and would like to focus on what changes it can make. Discussion ensued around the data the survey could provide.

Mr. Ryan stated he would like to vote on the calendar at the next meeting.

Ms. Briggs inquired on voting on having a half-day on the Friday before December break. Discussions regarding the half-day ensued. Ms. Briggs stated she received many complaints from parents and staff about the tardiness of the busses on Friday, December 23, 2016. Supt. Welch stated as long as the students are in school for a half day, it counts toward the 180 day requirement. Mr. Ryan felt it was more beneficial to parents and students to have a full day of school.

Ms. Briggs also brought up the fact that September 21; a planned half-day of professional development, is the Jewish Holiday of Rosh Hashanah. Ms. White asked if the professional development could be changed to September 28. Supt. Welch stated he and Dr. Kelly would need to review the dates.

Ms. Briggs motioned to change Friday, December 22, 2017 to a half day of school, Mr. Coughlin second; Committee voted 5-2 in favor. Mr. Bilafer and Mr. Ryan voted against the motion.

Minutes

Ms. White motioned to approve the minutes of January 25, 2017, Ms. Laparde second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Donations

Mr. Rippin noted that the following five grants have been donated by the Dedham Education Foundation:

- \$750 to the Dedham High School Library for graphic novels to improve its collection and for collaborative projects with the Social Studies department.

- \$750 to the Dedham Middle School Library for high interest graphic novels to promote love of reading.
- \$800, divided. \$200 to each elementary school library for multicultural books reflecting the community.
- \$206.40 to the four elementary school libraries toward supplies for ‘Fit Lit’ program encouraging reading and fitness via various book and fitness charms.
- \$500 to Dedham High School for video classes to host a two-day Visual Poem Workshop.

Ms. White motioned to accept with grateful appreciation the five grants donated by the Dedham Education Foundation, Ms. Briggs second; the Committee voted 7- 0 in favor.

Public comment

Julie Killgoar, Shiretown Road, is a teacher at Greenlodge School. She noted she had a good conversation with Supt. Welch this week. She wanted the Committee to know teachers are excited about restructure and coaching model. She asked the Committee to look at neighboring districts that have both coaches and specialists on staff. She noted the biggest concern for staff was the question of how one coach can replace reading and math specialist and be able to work with all the teachers as well.

Josh Donati, 22 Linden Place, announced that he is a teacher in another district and is a candidate for School Committee. He has experience with the coaching plan. He is glad coaches will be trained and will have a clear understanding of their roles. He agrees summer training will be very valuable. He also discussed the 80/20 coaching model with Dr. Kelly and the standardized MCAS/PARCC testing with Supt. Welch.

Acknowledgements and Announcements

Ms. Butler reminded the audience that Learn to Cope meetings are held on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 – 8:30 at Mother Brook. This organization helps families who are dealing with addiction.

Supt. Welch announced that the All Dedham Trivia Night will be held on March 25.

Ms. White motioned to adjourn the meeting, Ms. Laprade second; Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Meeting concluded at 9:10 p.m.