

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES
March 15, 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 6:18 p.m.

Ms. Butler announced the need to enter Executive Session.

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

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

The board returned from Executive Session and the regular meeting began at 7:20 p.m.

Student Update

None

Superintendent's Update

Superintendent Michael J. Welch

Classes at all Dedham Public Schools were cancelled yesterday due to the snowstorm.

Each of the four DMS Principal finalists visited DMS for a full day between March 6 and March 9. Supt. Welch is hoping to make a final appointment by the end of next week.

Update on the new ECEC - Sixty Percent Construction Documents for the new ECEC building were presented to the MSBA on March 2. Blasting began last Thursday at the site of the former Dexter School. Demolition of the existing structure will happen next, with completion of the site work/demolition by early July.

The FY18 Operating Budget was presented at the Finance and Warrant Committee meeting on March 7. The FWC will be hearing the Capital Budget on March 16.

On March 2 (Dr. Seuss' birthday) Supt. Welch participated in "Read Across America" Day at the Oakdale Elementary School.

On March 13, the third Impact Bargaining negotiation took place with the DEA. An MOU will be composed and discussed at the first Unit A negotiation scheduled for March 27.

The Dedham Education Foundation sponsored its annual Spelling Bee at Dedham Middle School on March 10. Supt. Welch thanked English Department Head Beth Sawyer for filling in for him as Master of Ceremonies.

The Policy Sub-Committee met with Massachusetts Association of School Committees representative Dorothy Presser on March 6. Work began on the School Committee's policy handbook reviewing every single policy.

Dedham High School is still looking for host families for a one-week experience with international students from China.

Dedham High School host an exclusive showing of the movie SCREENAGERS on April 11.

Reports

Special Education Update- Elizabeth O'Connell, Director of Special Education

Ms. O'Connell introduced her Special Education team in attendance- Marjorie Goldstein Fradin, Director of Elementary Special Education; Mary Bruhl, Director of Secondary Special Education; Meredith Becker, Director of Out of District Services; and Rebecca McCabe, Early Childhood Education Coordinator (not in attendance.) Ms. O'Connell's presentation will be available on the DPS district website. The main points of the presentation included Special Education mandates and funding, district restructuring, budgetary considerations and next steps.

Questions and Comments from the Committee followed.

Supt. Welch asked Ms. O'Connell if she could talk about the trends she has seen in Special Education. She explained the increase in Autism Spectrum Disorders. Her team is focusing on

stabilization programs. She also discussed the growth of the Special Education program at the Greenlodge School.

Supt. Welch questioned Mr. Rippin on Circuit Breaker numbers for FY18. Mr. Rippin discussed the trends in the numbers which are currently at 70 percent and the assumption is that they will be the same for the next year.

Mr. Ryan noted he liked the reorganization plan combining Special Education, Nursing and Counseling under one administrator. He inquired if there would be a civil rights officer. Ms. O'Connell replied that the Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services will take ownership of the civil rights requirements.

Ms. White asked for more information regarding the student assistance team. Ms. O'Connell explained that the team was not specified for Special Education. It really falls under RTI. Specialists will meet on a regular basis and bring forward students at risk. Established teams will be at every elementary school. This is a mandate, not a Special Education service.

Mr. Bilafer called attention to the reduction in out of district costs. He inquired if the gap in the numbers was associated with transportation costs. Ms. O'Connell affirmed stating there are currently no reimbursements for transportation.

Ms. Laprade inquired about the stabilization program. Ms. O'Connell stated that right now it is still in the brainstorming phase; trying to determine what the needs are within the schools. The idea is to support students in crises. The program needs to be available for regular education students who are waiting to be evaluated for Special Education services.

Ms. Briggs further discussed stabilization and how difficult it is to predict future needs.

Ms. Butler inquired if the coordination of programs has been derived from previous audit findings. Ms. O'Connell stated yes and they are in the process of a mid cycle review. She also reviewed all the improvements that have been made since the last set of findings.

Ms. Butler inquired as to the benefits of the new Assistant Superintendent to Pupil Services position relative to students. Ms. O'Connell explained how the merging of the three departments will bring services together and be better able to address the needs of students.

Mr. Coughlin felt this new structure would also better support teachers.

Curriculum Update - Dr. Ian Kelly, Assistant Superintendent

ELL Liaison Karen MacKenzie Sleeman gave a presentation on ELL services. The presentation will be available on the DPS website. The main points of the presentation included an overview of ELL staff and students at each of the schools, the diversity and complexity of ELL learners, the number of different languages spoken, ELL determination and testing, service delivery, and updates.

Comments and questions from the Committee followed.

Mr. Coughlin inquired on Federal/State reimbursements for ELL services. Mr. Rippin explained under Title III the amount is less than \$25,000. Mr. Coughlin inquired if there were any services for economically challenged ELL families. Ms. Sleeman explained that there are parent classes available.

Ms. White questioned the number of Kindergartners who have registered this year who speak a different language. Ms. Sleeman explained that 1/3 of the students in this year's Kindergarten class speak a language other than English at home. Ms. White inquired as to how many students cross over into Special Education. Ms. O'Connell answered that 36 ELL students receive both ELL and Special Education services.

Mr. Billafer inquired if ELL teachers are brought in for translations. Dr. Kelly explained that there have been instances where foreign language teachers have been called upon for translation. However, Catholic Charities and Bay State Interpreters are the main organizations used by the administration for translation services.

Ms. Laprade made a statement noting that there are 27 different languages spoken with the schools and feels that Dedham's close proximity to Boston and the growing technology industry has contributed to the rising ELL population.

Ms. Briggs stated that she believes the more communication that can be facilitated with families the better, as waiting for translation documents can be frustrating.

Ms. Butler inquired about the ages at which the school department is responsible for ELL or SLIFE students. Mr. Welch explained that public education terminates upon graduation. There are also constraints where student age gaps can only be 24 months apart. Mr. Welch feels there is a need for more flexibility in this area. Ms. Butler inquired as to whether ELL teachers work with other community organizations. Ms. Sleeman explained that the Dedham Youth Commission has an ELL after school program.

Supt. Welch noted that online registration is available in Spanish. He also would like to seek out members of the community to be 'ambassadors' to new or incoming parents to help with registration and other paperwork. Supt. Welch and Ms. Sleeman also discussed the fact that students who speak another language must pass the MCAS exam and that the MCAS is only available in English. Supt. Welch and Ms. Sleeman also discussed the amount of time it takes to test each student to determine eligibility for ELL services.

AED (Automated External Defibrillators) Readiness Report- Gail Kelley, Lead Nurse
Nurse Leader Gail Kelley updated the Committee on the state law requiring AEDs in all school buildings. Ms. Kelley's presentation will be available on the DPS website. The new law states that every school in Massachusetts must have an AED and one staff member trained in both CPR and AED use. Ms. Kelley's presentation also included medical emergency response plans, the location of AEDs in all of the schools, and the training of DHS seniors. Ms. Kelley noted that Dedham is ahead of state requirements. Ms. Kelley introduced Maria Antonuccio, the high school nurse, who was also in attendance this evening.

Ms. Butler stated that the AED requirements are another unfunded mandate by the state. She inquired on the cost. Ms. Kelley stated that the average cost of an AED is \$1,000. Ms. Butler inquired if we would need any additional AEDs in the next couple of years. Ms. Kelley did not think so.

Winter & Spring Athletic Update - Steve Traister, Athletic Director

Mr. Traister presented an update on winter and spring athletics. The presentation will be available on the DPS district website. The presentation included winter participation numbers, winter records, spring participation sign-up numbers, and the announcement of two new coaches- Marisol Henderson, the girl's lacrosse coach, and Mike Nosky, the girl's softball coach. Mr. Traister also gave an update on the AEDs for the Athletics Department. All High School coaches are CPR trained and most have been AED trained. Another AED training will be held in the spring for new coaches. Mr. Traister reviewed where all athletic AEDs are located. He also stated that Dedham is ahead of the state requirements for AED compliance.

Ms. White inquired whether skiing was the only sport the Tri-Valley league that Dedham did not have. Mr. Traister explained that the Tri-Valley league does not have a skiing program.

Old/New Business

Discussion and Vote of Article 13

Mayanne Briggs and Steve Bilafer reviewed the offsite issues in regards to the new ECEC at Dexter School. Discussion of improvements includes posting speed limit signs, flashing speed signs, turnoff lane improvements, and changes to road configurations.

Ms. Briggs Read Article 13 which will be presented at Spring Town Meeting. The Town Manager is asking for a vote of endorsement from the School Committee.

Article Thirteen: *by the Town Manger.* To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow or transfer from available funds, a sum of money to be expended under the direction of the School Building Rehabilitation Committee for the purpose of designing extended measures related to traffic flow, access, egress and signalization at the new Early Childhood Education Center ("ECEC"), to be located at 1100 High Street in Dedham, Massachusetts, as required in connection with Site Plan Review, and which study and work related thereto is outside the scope of the Massachusetts School Building Authority project, and therefore the sole responsibility of the Town, or take any other action relative thereto. *Referred to Finance and Warrant Committee for study and report.*

Mr. Coughlin motioned to approve the endorsement of Article 13 being presented at the Spring 2017 Town Meeting, Ms. Laprade second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Mr. Coughlin noted he would like see traffic studies done in all school zones next year. He would like to see this proposed at a future Town meeting.

District Strategic Improvement Plan

Supt. Welch has comprised a document listing and answering many community questions regarding the district restructuring plan. The document is in the Committees shared folder. He has asked for the Committee to provide feedback. He would like to get the document posted to the website and distributed to the Dedham Times as soon as possible.

Ms. Briggs noted the term "strategic improvement" may want to be changed for clarity to "restructuring".

Ms. Butler explained that if anyone would like to contact members of the School Committee that their email addresses are all available on the DPS website. She also noted it is the Chair's responsibility to respond to all emails.

Minutes

Mr. Coughlin motioned to approve the minutes of March 1, 2017 as presented, Ms. Laprade second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Donations

Mr. Bilafer motioned to accept with grateful appreciation a donation in the amount of \$900 from the Dedham Junior Women's Club to be allocated \$150 to each Dedham Public School library in support of the areas of Social Studies and Fine Arts, Mr. Ryan second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Ms. White motioned to accept with grateful appreciation a donation in the amount of \$1,000 from an anonymous donor in support of the DHS Winter Percussion group, Ms. Briggs second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Ms. Laprade motioned to accept with grateful appreciation a donation in the amount of \$100 from Representative Paul McMurtry in support of the DMS class trip to Washington, D.C., Ms. Briggs second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Public comment

None

Acknowledgements and Announcements

The Town of Dedham's Public Service Committee is seeking nominations for its Public Service Award. Forms can be found on the Town's website. The deadline is March 30.

Ms. Butler announced that on March 29 the Committee will be voting on the Superintendent's new contract.

The next Finance Committee meeting discussing the Capital Budget will be on March 16.

The DEF is hosting its 25th Anniversary Gala on March 31 at the Endicott Estate.

The Discover Summer Activities Fair sponsored by the Avery PTO was held on March 4 and books containing camp information are available.

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.