

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

June 6, 2017

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Mayanne Briggs, Chair
Steve Bilafer, Vice-Chair
Kevin Coughlin
Joshua Donati
Lisa Laprade
Melissa Pearrow
Tracey White

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ABSENT:

None

MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:

Michael Welch, Superintendent
Samuel Rippin, Assistant Superintendent for Business & Finance

Meeting Location: Avery Elementary School

Meeting commenced at 7:05 p.m.

Recognitions

The Committee recognized students from Dedham Middle School and the Riverdale Elementary School who scored impressive grades on the New England Math League assessment. Math Coach Nancy Clement, DMS Principal Margo Fraczek, Riverdale Principal Ed Paris and Math Specialist Sue Turner presented certificates to the students in attendance.

The Committee honored Dedham Public School retirees for 2017. Principal Ashley Bodkins acknowledged Joe Feely, custodian at the Greenlodge Elementary School. Principal Paul Sullivan recognized Christine Sullivan, paraprofessional at the Early Childhood Education Center. Supt. Welch noted two additional retirees, Anne Podolski, math teacher at Dedham Middle School and Susan Kanopkin, math teacher at Dedham High School.

Superintendent's Update

Superintendent Michael J. Welch

Dedham High School held its annual graduation ceremony for the Class of 2017 on June 3. Supt. Welch thanked the DHS faculty, administration, secretaries and custodians for all their work in organizing the event.

Supt. Welch attended the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents Spring Meeting in Marlboro on May 18. Governor Baker was the featured speaker.

Dedham held its annual Student Government Day on May 23. Over twenty-five students from Dedham High School shadowed various town and school officials to learn more about the roles of municipal and government workers. Supt. Welch thanked the School Committee members who participated and Social Studies Department Chair Andrew Morton for helping to organize the event in conjunction with Town Hall.

Supt. Welch helped to celebrate the senior class by attending the Annual Class Night on May 30 and the annual Spring Athletics Awards Night on May 23.

Supt. Welch is nearing completion of the hiring process for the positions associated with the Strategic Improvement Plan Restructuring. He is hoping to make final announcements tomorrow.

The ECEC Architect KBA and project manager CMS have scheduled a series of meetings to discuss plans for the new ECEC. These meetings have discussed playgrounds, mechanical systems, security, technology, and art/music/library spaces. The architect is getting preliminary quotes and will have their 90% documents completed later this month for submission to the MSBA.

Over the course of the past few weeks, Dr. Kelly has been working with TLA (Teaching and Learning Alliance) in focus groups to coordinate feedback from faculty regarding professional development and a teacher-centered focus for next school year. The District is also sending a team of early educators from the ECEC to the Lectio early literacy follow-up conference this Friday.

A group of administrators will be attending the MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey follow-up seminar on Thursday. The group will meet with twenty-four other member districts and representatives from EDC (Educational Development Corporation) to learn more about the specific data generated from the recent survey.

The Rail Trail Feasibility Study meeting will be on June 13 at 7:00 PM at Dedham Middle School.

The next negotiations session with the Dedham Education Association will be held on June 14.

Reports

Spring Athletics Update by Athletic Director Steve Traister

Mr. Traister recognized Senior Grey Gettleman for his many athletic and academic accomplishments over the past four years. Mr. Gettleman along with the NHS organized a golf fundraiser that raised over \$34,000 for the Jimmy Fund.

The presentation will be available on the DPS website. The presentation included spring participation numbers, accomplishments, records, winning percentages, and upcoming changes for the 2017-2018 school year. Changes include the move to the TriValley League, reduction of user fees, a new district van, a strength and conditioning coach and improvements to Loewen Field. Mr. Rippin spoke to the reduction of user fees and Mr. Welch elaborated on the collaborative efforts with the Parks and Recreation Department to improve Loewen Field.

Discussions and questions followed.

Ms. Laprade asked, with the addition of the strength and conditioning coach, if the Athletics Department would still be working with Marathon Sports. Mr. Traister said they would and that the new position was an enhancement to the department.

Ms. Laprade also asked if all the sports teams turn in their uniforms. Mr. Traister said most get returned except for items such as swim suits, caps, and hockey socks.

Mr. Bilafer commented that the addition of a strength and conditioning coach will be a benefit to the Athletics Department because it will help prevent injury and provide proper training to keep athletes safe.

Mr. Coughlin thanked Mr. Traister for his efforts in moving Dedham to the TriValley League and feels it will be a benefit to student athletes.

Supt. Welch noted that Dedham was the eleventh team in the TriValley League and inquired if there would be a twelfth. Mr. Traister had heard that Norwood was thinking about moving, but did not have confirmation of that status.

Supt. Welch also inquired if any town had replaced Dedham in the Bay State League. Mr. Traister was unaware of any other town being voted into that league.

Finance Presentation by Town Manager Jim Kern and Selectman Michael Butler

The presentation will be available on the DPS website. The presentation is a review of Dedham's financial health. Mr. Butler reviewed the principles and considerations of the presentation. Mr. Kern reviewed property taxes, rates and assessed values. Mr. Butler categorized the Town of Dedham's infrastructure and long term liabilities. Mr. Butler made note that over 50% of the Town's budget goes to the School Department.

Discussion and questions followed.

Ms. Laprade commented on the importance of the investment in the public school system.

Ms. Pearrow noted she would like to see data from comparable towns and their percentages that go toward the school budget. Mr. Kern commented that 59% was comparable and noted the complexities of comparing budgets due to methodologies.

Mr. Bilafer complimented the fiscal leadership of the town. He also noted that state finances play a major roll in the school budget. Mr. Bilafer and Mr. Kern discussed the State's financial formula for public school funding.

Mr. Donati inquired as to how the Town is planning to communicate and educate the public on the finances behind the tax rate. Mr. Butler and Mr. Kern are looking toward making a town-wide presentation in the fall as well as creating a flyer to include in tax bills.

Mr. Coughlin commented on the positive communication between the Superintendent and the Town Manager and the cooperation between the School Committee and Board of Selectman.

Ms. White inquired as to the use of the website for communication. Mr. Kern said they will post the presentation to the website along with producing the mailing.

Ms. Briggs asked for some clarification to go along with the presentation. She noted that the school department employs over 600 people and she asked for the number of employees on the Town side to be included. She noted that teacher pensions are funded through the MTA, not the Town. She also noted the assessment of per pupil ratio for students attending Norfolk Aggie and Blue Hills is larger than that of neighboring towns.

Supt. Welch asked for clarification on the End of Year Audit and the need for a Town and School agreement regarding expenses. Mr. Rippin and Mr. Kern discussed the audit and requirement and agreed to start working on a document.

Old/New Business

Discussion and Vote on DMS Schedule Change for September 2017

Supt. Welch noted that the schedule change has been discussed again at last night's Policy Subcommittee meeting. Ms. Laprade added that the Subcommittee voted 3-0 in favor of the scheduling change. There were no additional questions from the Committee.

Mr. Coughlin motioned to accept the new Dedham Middle School Schedule, proposed at the May 16 meeting, to begin September 2017; Ms. Pearrow second, the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Discussion & Vote on DMS Field Trip to Canobie Lake Park

DMS Interim Principal Margo Fraczek and DMS Special Education teacher George Kelleher-Bianchi presented a summary of the seventh grade out of state field trip to Canobie Lake Park. The students will be completing a modified packet from Canobie Lake's online science and ELA program. A copy of the packet was presented to the Committee.

Ms. White asked when the students would be completing the ELA portion of the packet since the field trip was on the second to the last day of school. Mr. Kelleher explained it will be done on the last day of school.

Ms. Laprade asked about the cost was to families for the trip. Dr. Fraczek stated that it was \$40, but they make sure all students are able to attend despite the cost.

Mr. Coughlin asked if the students would be completing the worksheets presented to the Committee. Mr. Kelleher said they would but with some modifications.

Ms. Briggs asked if DMS had the proper insurance to cover the trip. Mr. Rippin confirmed the district had the proper coverage. Ms. Briggs asked the Middle School to be aware of the timing of this field trip in the future to ensure more productive output from students. She also asked who was chaperoning the trip. Dr. Fraczek explained that there would be twenty chaperones made up of seventh grade teachers and paraprofessionals. Ms. Briggs asked whether accommodations had been made for all students attending the trip. Dr. Fraczek stated that they had.

Ms. Pearrow motioned to approve the seventh grade field trip to Canobie Lake Park on June 22, 2017, Ms. Laprade second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Ms. Laprade inquired as to whether middle school students would be keeping their Chromebooks over the summer. Supt. Welch indicated that he would like to see this happen but a definitive decision had not yet been made.

Discussion on Appointment to the Dedham Coalition for Drug and Alcohol Awareness

Ms. Pearrow has offered to serve on this board. Supt. Welch provided some background information on the Coalition and supported Ms. Pearrow's appointment. No further questions from the Committee followed.

Mr. Bilafer motioned to approve the appointment of Dr. Pearrow to the Dedham Coalition for Drug and Alcohol Awareness; Mr. Coughlin second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Discussion & Vote on Surplus Books

Mr. Rippin provided the Committee with a list of surplus books that he is requesting to be removed from inventory. Mr. Rippin thanked Pam Neill and Nancy Clement for their coordinating efforts. The books are from the 'Treasures' curriculum.

Ms. Pearrow inquired as to what happens to the books. Mr. Rippin replied in the past they have gone to organizations that send them to developing countries where they are reused.

Mr. Donati motioned to approve the list of surplus books from the elementary school 'Treasures' curriculum, Ms. White second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Subcommittee Reports & Updates

Discussion on DHS Student Requirements

Supt. Welch noted there was a folder in the Committee's shared drive that includes information on the proposed student requirements for incoming freshman - the graduating class of 2021. Unfortunately, due to DMS Awards Night, no administrators from the DHS were able to attend tonight's School Committee meeting.

Ms. Laprade noted that the Policy Subcommittee met last evening with Dorothy Presser from the MASC to continue with the policy review. The Committee completed reviews of two more sections of the handbook. The Subcommittee also took four votes:

- Naming the Language Lab at DHS after former Foreign Language teacher and Department Chair Ms. Nancy Bradley, voted 3-0
- Naming the Custodian Closet at Greenlodge School after retired custodian Joe Feely, voted 3-0
- Dedham Middle School Schedule Change for September 2017, voted 3-0
- New High School Graduation Requirements for incoming freshman of 2017, voted 3-0 on the following:
 - Change the Math requirement from 3 classes to 4.
 - Change the number of classes requiring a passing grade to allow students to participate in afterschool activities to 5 classes.

The consolidation of GPA equivalents for College Prep 1 & 2 is being placed on hold until the next meeting on June 27.

Ms. Briggs stated the four votes will be on the agenda for the next School Committee meeting.

Ms. Laprade read the proposed policy for security cameras on school property. The policy will be available on the DPS district website.

Minutes

Ms. Laprade motioned to approve the minutes of May 16, 2017 as presented, Mr. Bilafer second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Donations

None

Public Comment

Supt. Welch apologized to the Committee for any perceived lack of communication regarding boards being placed on the fence around the Middle School Field for the purpose of the Middle School Community Art Project. He stated his support for the project and noted the need for a better focus on communication to the community.

Ms. Briggs read a statement in regards to the Community Mural Project, presenting its background and sequence of events. Ms. Briggs noted in her statement that Selectman Dennis Guilfoyle did not contact the School Committee or Superintendent Welch in regard to the mural. She encouraged staff to work with the Committee on projects outside the boundaries of the school walls.

Mr. Coughlin asked about the timeline of completing the mural and whether it be completed before Flag Day. Supt. Welch said the work would begin this weekend and would be completed

before the parade. The mural will be placed along Mt. Vernon Street and will be displayed there for several weeks.

Mr. Coughlin thanked Dennis Guilfoyle for his service as Selectman.

Acknowledgements and Announcements

Ms. White thanked all the staff and especially the custodians and maintenance staff for assisting with the DHS graduation and the rain delay.

Mr. Bilafer noted that the graduation program included a listing of colleges that Dedham High School graduates would attend in the fall. He was very impressed by the list and feels it should be recognized.

Ms. Briggs congratulated all the New England Math League high scorers for their hard work and accomplishment.

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 pm.