

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

September 19, 2017

REVISED

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
Dr. Ian Kelly, Assistant Superintendent
Samuel Rippin, Assistant Superintendent for Business & Finance

Meeting Location: Avery Elementary School

Meeting commenced at 7:00 p.m.

Recognitions

Supt. Welch introduced the new Director of Counseling, Dr. Ashley Dube. Dr. Dube spoke about her professional background and answered questions from the Committee regarding health and wellness, prevention programs, parent outreach, clinical teams, and her mentor, Jenny King from Newton. Ms. Dube also mentioned that the MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey presentation will be on October 26 at 6:30pm at Dedham Middle School.

Supt. Welch introduced Ron Sudmyer, the interim principal at Dedham High School. Mr. Sudmyer offered his first impression of DHS and specifically complimented the administrative staff, facilities personnel and food service workers. He stated that his mission is to help as many people in as many ways as he can. He also spoke about his experiences developing a study focus curriculum at Framingham High School.

Student Update

The school committee welcomed back DHS Senior Evan Landry and new representative Junior Abigail Jiminian. Evan and Abigail updated the Committee on happenings and events occurring at the ECEC, Elementary Schools, Middle School and High School. A special mention was made of “Pinwheels for Peace” happening at the Riverdale and Greenlodge Schools through the efforts of Art Teacher Bridget O’Leary.

Superintendent's Update

Superintendent Michael J. Welch

All district educators and administrators are currently completing their self-assessments and preparing their annual goals as part of the yearly supervision and evaluation process.

On September 18, Supt. Welch received a memo from the Department of Education asking him to identify whether Dedham will use computer-based testing or paper testing in grades 3 and 6 for the state mandated Next Generation MCAS exams in Spring 2018. Supt. Welch will be replying that Dedham will use computer-based testing in all grades 3 through 8 in Spring 2018.

On September 13, Supt. Welch, ECEC Principal Dr. Paul Sullivan and about 30 ECEC teachers and staff visited the site of the new Early Childhood Education Center. An official groundbreaking will be planned in the near future.

On September 1, Supt. Welch and Fine Arts Director Jeff Bolduc met with Amy Fichera and Frank Mullen from the Dedham School of Music to discuss their ongoing partnership.

On September 12, Supt. Welch and members of the administration had another meeting with the Parks and Recreation department regarding the ongoing work at the pool field along with the care of the high school practice field and Loewen softball field.

On September 13, Supt. Welch met with the Finance and Warrant Committee to discuss their ongoing “Benchmarking” study for all town and school departments. Town Finance Director Andrea Terkelsen produced a Town Statistical and Financial Analysis report about three weeks ago and this information will be used by the FinCom to benchmark the town against comparable communities. The FinCom requested that Supt. Welch return to them in October with his list of comparable communities from a school perspective.

On September 14, Supt. Welch filmed the 8th edition of “Ask the Superintendent” with Dedham Cable TV.

Yesterday, Supt. Welch, DHS Principal Jim Forrest and PreK-8 STEM Curriculum Coordinator Linda Kobierski attended a Department of Education conference about the Early Warning Indicator System (EWIS) available to all districts.

On Thursday, Supt. Welch will be meeting again with the Equity and Inclusion Task Force. Supt. Welch has received about 20 emails from faculty and community members interested in joining the efforts.

Dr. Kelly reviewed the extensive number of orientations, trainings, and curriculum development sessions that have occurred since the last School Committee meeting on September 5:

- Approximately 48 hours of training for approximately 170 participants
 - Early Literacy/Numeracy
 - Best Practices in Elementary Reading/Writing
 - Comprehensive Assessment Systems K-5
 - Curriculum Development and Leadership
 - Instructional Coaching
- Instructional Coaching
 - Coaches and coordinators have focused on building schedules and communication mechanisms to support faculty and staff access to coaching and key district resources.
 - Website -Resources to Support K-5 teachers in implementing new curriculum and teaching practices
 - TLA Resources for Workshop
 - Coaches Corner
- Foundations
 - Systematic and structured approach to phonics instruction in grades K-2.
- Leveled Literacy Intervention
 - Systematic, structured, comprehensive literacy intervention for at risk students in grades K - 8.
- STAR 360
 - Web-based assessment tool used to quickly and accurately assess early literacy, reading, and numeracy skills for all students in grades K-5.
- Teaching and Learning Alliance (TLA)
 - Research based, job embedded professional learning focusing on best practices in the teaching of reading and writing in grades K-5.
- Curriculum Development with Teacher's 21
 - Building district capacity to write coherent and rigorous curriculum for PK-12.

Supt. Welch noted that all of this professional development had occurred over the last 10 days.

School Committee members Ms. Pearrow and Mr. Bilafer noted their support of the information provided to the Committee and the work that had been done thus far.

Mr. Coughlin asked how the students were adjusting to additional adults being in the classroom. Dr. Kelly has received positive feedback from the curriculum coordinators about the students' response. He noted we have developed a culture of visitors in the classroom, so students are used to this environment.

Mr. Donati inquired into what practices were occurring in the classrooms right now. Dr. Kelly reviewed the status of each of the programs and how they were currently being utilized or how they would be utilized in the upcoming school year.

Mr. Donati also inquired into the Instructional Coaches and their status. Dr. Kelly explained that the focus of the first few days of school has been on preparing partnership agreements and getting acquainted with staff and buildings. Mr. Donati expressed his interest of hearing from a Coach and Teacher who have been directly working together.

Mr. Donati asked about the students who would be new to taking the MCAS on line and how we are preparing them for this new task. Dr. Kelly explained that there was prep testing available online and the STAR360 assessment is also taken online. This will help to prepare students for online testing and get them acquainted with their electronic devices.

Ms White asked what the overall response was from the teaching staff to working with the Coaches. Supt. Welch noted that the first ten days of school have been about developing relationships and showing the teachers they will be supported in all areas. Feedback will follow.

With regard to the benchmarking data, Mr. Donati commented on his surprise of the towns against which Dedham was benchmarked.

Mr. Bilafer noted there is a difference when comparing town employees vs. school employees.

Public Comment

Timothy Chirokas, age 11, 5th grade, appeared with his mother, Bernadette Chirokas, to explain that there have been several instances of students locking bathroom doors, making access to the bathroom stalls very difficult. The Committee thanked Timothy for speaking to them and assured that it would investigate the matter.

Old/New Business

Schedule of Upcoming School Committee Meeting Locations

The School Committee discussed holding meetings at different schools with the intent to connect with school PTO's before each meeting. The plan is to have coffee and conversation beginning at 6:30pm with the formal meetings following at 7:00pm. Ms. Briggs asked the Committee for potential questions to ask of all the principals and PTO boards. Ms. Briggs read the tentative schedule:

10/17/2017	Oakdale
10/26/2017	DMS
11/7/21017	Greenlodge
11/21/2017	Riverdale
12/5/2017	DMS
12/19/2017	DHS
1/2/2018	ECEC
1/16/2018	DMS
1/30/2018	Avery

The Committee discussed moving the Avery School interactive meeting to October 3.

Other questions/ideas from the Committee included:

- Having Denise Moroney attend the meetings to be able answer facilities/building wants and needs
- Inviting abutters/neighbors to attend meetings
- Having the Community Police Officer available to answer questions
- What questions are parents frequently asking other parents at school?
- Where is communication lacking?
- Through what vehicle would parents like to receive communication?

- What creates/drives the climate of your school?
- What are the schools doing well?
- What are the challenges of the school?

Second Public Comment

Allison Staton, 30 Woodleigh Road, Town Meeting Member, wanted to let the Committee know that she appreciated its comments regarding the events in Charlottesville, VA as well as its statement of commitment to inclusive schools

Subcommittee Reports & Updates

Policy

Ms. Laprade updated the Committee on the Policy Review process. The subcommittee has reviewed 7 out of 12 sections covering 128 policies. Ms. Laprade proposed the Committee begin voting on the revised or new policies as they are completed. A discussion took place on how the policies should be shared, reviewed and voted. The first step will be to provide all the documents that have been reviewed to the entire Committee through a Google shared folder. Any new policies will be posted on the district website and read at three public meetings before being voted.

First Reading of Proposed Policy - Guidelines for Public Comment:

Ms Laprade summarized the first reading of the new proposed policy- Guidelines for Public Comment. Ms. Laprade explained that the Policy is being adopted from the MASC policy guidelines. The policy directs public participation at School Committee meetings. The policy states the public's responsibilities, time constraints, and the Chair's role during the Public Comment portion of a meeting. The proposed Policy entitled 'Guidelines for Public Comment' can be found in its entirety on the Dedham Public School's District Webpage.

SBRC

Mr. Bilafer announced that H. V. Collins of Providence, RI was awarded the construction bid for the new ECEC. The SBRC will be meeting with the contractor on September 25 and a community meeting with abutters will take place on October 2.

Ms. Briggs announced that at this time the project is on time and under budget.

Mr. Bilafer thanked Dave Roberts and Ron Hathaway for all of their hard work and positivity on the SBRC.

Minutes

Mr. Bilafer motioned to approve the minutes of September 5, 2017 as presented, Mr. Coughlin second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Donations

None

Acknowledgements and Announcements

Mr. Coughlin expressed his gratitude to all those who attended the 'Run for the Fallen' this past weekend. He especially wanted to thank the American Legion, the VFW, Board of Selectman and Chuck Wagon Catering for their support and participation.

Ms. White announced that Dedham Day was planned for Sunday, September 23 at Memorial Parks from 12:00pm to 5:00pm.

Mr. Bilafer announced that 'Bernie's Run' will be on Sunday, October 1. Please sign up at runsignup.com

Ms. White motioned to adjourn the meeting of September 19, 2017, Ms. Pearrow second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Meeting Concluded at 8:40p.m.