

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES
November 7, 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
Dr. Ian Kelly, Assistant Superintendent
Samuel Rippin, Assistant Superintendent for Business & Finance

Meeting Location: Greenlodge Elementary School

Meeting commenced at 6:30 p.m.

Greenlodge student Emma Laprade, Grade 5, opened the meeting.

Ms. Briggs asked for a motion to enter Executive Session under Exemption 3, Contract Negotiations.

Mr. Coughlin motioned to enter Executive Session under Exemption 3, Contract Negotiations, Dr. Pearrow second, a roll call vote was taken:

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

The Committee returned from Executive Session at 6:45 p.m. and the regular meeting commenced.

Recognitions

Principal Bodkins introduced 5th grader Michael Norton, who donated a "Buddy Bench" to the Greenlodge Elementary School. The bench was created and donated by Mrs. Norton and the IUPAT District Council #35. Michael explained how he came up with the idea for the "Buddy Bench" and how it is a place for students to make new friends.

Ms. White motioned to accept with grateful appreciation the donation of the "Buddy Bench" from the Norton Family and the IUPAT District Council #35, Dr. Pearrow second, the Committee voted unanimously 7-0.

Principal Bodkins introduced the Greenlodge Student Council - Katie Avila, Lorenzo Simonds, Payton MacDonald, Nolan McDermott, Dylan O'Connell, Madison Williams, Tommy O'Neill, Keira Murphy-Clinton, Adam Benoit, Chris Carraway, James Doyle and Kayley DeAngelis (many of whom were in attendance.)

Each student had a chance to speak about a different event, activity or educational program occurring at the school. They also presented a list of items to improve the school including heating, air-conditioning, repairing of fields, new desks and chairs, a cafeteria, playground improvements, language classes and enrichment during the day.

Ms. Bodkins introduced the teachers who lead the Student Council - Ms. Edmonds, Grade 5 and Ms. Magnacca, Grade 4.

Members of the School Committee introduced themselves to the parents and students.

Supt. Welch spoke to the students and parents about what the School Committee does including its subcommittees, budget planning, the Dedham Public Schools Master Plan and School Improvement Plans.

Ms. Briggs opened the floor to parents to hear their comments or concerns about the Greenlodge Elementary School.

Dr. Pearrow asked the students how they came up with their list of improvements. They responded that the Student Council distributed surveys in each of their classrooms as well as in the third grade classrooms.

Mr. Bilafer explained that the Budget Subcommittee takes all their issues seriously and into consideration when preparing the budget.

Supt. Welch spoke about how he would also like to see foreign languages introduced at the elementary level.

Parents, students and the Committee discussed high achievement programs (gifted and talented programs), makerspaces, enrichment programs, STEM curriculum, physical fitness classes, MCAS workshops, differentiated classrooms, maintaining the fields, substitute teachers, assisting teachers through interns, and increasing the size of parking lot.

Student Update

Junior Abigail Jiminian updated the Committee on happenings and events occurring throughout the Dedham Public Schools.

Superintendent's Update

Superintendent Michael J. Welch

Today was the District's annual Full Professional Development Day. All of the attendees had the opportunity to choose three of twenty-five different workshops. Five of these seminars were facilitated by outside providers while many were conducted by knowledgeable educators from within the district. Dr. Ashley Dube, Director of Counseling Services, and Gail Kelley, Director of Health Services, had arranged for specific programming for their departments to participate in an off-site program sponsored by Northeastern University.

On October 18 the Equity and Inclusion Task Force held an open community meeting at Dedham Middle School. About twenty-five people from the school district and the community attended the event, and a series of action steps were suggested.

On October 19, the TEC Cooperative held a 50th Anniversary Celebration at the State House Hall of Flags Atrium. Chair Mayanne Briggs and Superintendent Welch attended. The event was cosponsored by Representative Paul McMurtry.

On October 23, the formal ECEC ground breaking was held at the new building site. About seventy people attended from the town, state and MSBA. State Treasurer Debra Goldberg was the keynote speaker and nine kindergarten students from the ECEC were special guests.

On October 25 and 26, the Dedham Public Schools sent a total of fifty-one educators to Gillette Stadium to participate in the MassCUE (Computer Using Educators) conference. Dedham had the second largest presence. This was an opportunity to learn and share insights into student and teacher technology integration with colleagues from around the state. Supt. Welch attended a presentation by Dedham's Technology Integration Specialist, Judy Foley.

On October 26, the District presented the results from the 2016 MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey. A full panel of students and leaders from the district answered questions from the audience. This presentation is currently posted on the main page of the Dedham Public Schools website.

On October 27, Supt. Welch participated in the first of this year's Superintendents' Roundtable Discussions facilitated by William James College President Nick Covino and former Teachers21 Executive Director John D'Auria.

Supt. Welch has continued his annual Senior Interviews and is hoping to get to speak to the majority of seniors this year.

The district mailed home all students' 2017 MCAS Student Assessment reports on November 3.

On November 1, Supt. Welch attended the annual MASC/MASS joint conference in Hyannis. Other members of the Committee were able to attend on additional days.

On November 3, the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) released a very comprehensive 2017 School Building Survey Report categorizing all school buildings in the Commonwealth. The report is very extensive and Supt. Welch encourages all members of the committee to review its findings and the implications for the Committee's work in Dedham in the years to come.

Buildings that were newly constructed or substantially renovated in the past 10 years were not included in the survey, but there were still almost 1500 individual schools surveyed and assessed in 2016-17. All schools were ranked on a 1-4 scale with 1 being "generally good condition" and 4 being a building that requires "moderate to extensive renovation and in poor condition". There were 270 buildings across the state that received a rating of "3" or "4". Only one building in Dedham, Oakdale School, received a rating of 3. Riverdale and Greenlodge received a "2" and DHS received a "1".

Mr. Coughlin noted he attended a conference last week and the MSBA is going to start reviewing schools built in the past 10 years to make sure they are functioning properly.

Ms. White noted how well behaved the ECEC students were at the Groundbreaking Ceremony

Reports

MCAS Results Presentation

Dr. Kelly reviewed the recently released MCAS results. The presentation will be available on the Dedham Public Schools Website. The presentation reviewed the transitions of the MCAS exam over the past three years and the scaling differences between the Legacy MCAS and the Next Generation test. An eighth grade math question was presented to display the increased rigor of the Next Generation exam. Dr. Kelly also reviewed how the exam is broken down by question. An 8th grade ELA composition question, an 8th grade selected response (multiple choice) question, and a 4th grade math question was presented. Dr. Kelly broke down Dedham's performance by state, district and town. He also discussed student growth percentiles in ELA and math.

Questions from the Committee followed.

Ms. Laprade inquired about the student growth chart. Dr. Kelly explained the principals of student growth. Supt. Welch stated that all the data regarding student growth can be found on the DESE website.

Mr. Donati noted that the numbers are only a baseline because of the change to the Next Generation MCAS exam. He did state his concern about the difference in student growth between schools.

Dr. Pearrow also noted the difference in numbers among the elementary schools and questioned how the schools are using the data and how are they addressing the diversity. Supt. Welch explained that all the principals had access to the results and would be discussing them with their staff. He noted that the Instructional Coaches can use the data to change instructional practices.

Dr. Pearrow asked if it was possible to track students who have only attended school in Dedham. Supt. Welch explained there is no provision for student's mobility and the numbers do not attribute students moving in and out of the district.

Mr. Coughlin inquired if the tests will change again. Supt. Welch feels the Dept. of Education will stay the course using the Next Generation exam. The move is toward computer based testing.

Mr. Coughlin inquired into the results from the High School. Dr. Kelly noted that DHS had a 98% passing level.

Ms. White asked if there was a more simplified way to view performance graphs and growth charts. Dr. Kelly will try to provide the Committee with a link for this information.

Ms. White also inquired as to which tool is best for parents to use to understand how their child is performing. Supt. Welch feels that more explanation is better and they should be looking at as much information as possible.

Ms. White asked what parents can do to help their children in areas of need. Supt. Welch said he would try to put together a presentation that will help parents understand areas of need.

Mr. Bilafer asked that, if the data is only a baseline, how is student growth being determined. Supt. Welch explained growth is determined by comparing students with similar score profiles.

Mr. Bilare inquired about the accountability rating. Supt. Welch explained Districts who took the Next Generation exam will not be given a new accountability rating.

Ms. Briggs understood that there were a lot of questions regarding MCAS scores, but the Committee needed to move onto the next agenda item.

Old/New Business

Discussion and Vote on FY19 Budget Calendar

Mr. Coughlin stated the Budget Subcommittee had unanimously voted in favor of the Budget Calendar. Mr. Coughlin read off the timeline for the Budget Subcommittee. There were no questions from the Committee.

Mr. Bilafer motioned to approve the FY19 Budget Calendar as presented, Ms. White second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Subcommittee Reports & Updates

Policy

Ms. Laprade reviewed the previous Policy Subcommittee meeting and noted the next meeting will take place on November 15 to continue the work on policy review.

Ms. Laprade gave the second reading of two new proposed policies: *School District Annual Report* and *Administrative Reports*. Both policies are located on the Dedham Public Schools website.

Ms. Laprade suggested voting full policy approvals for Sections A, B, C, and D at next meeting.

Equity and Inclusion Task Force

No additional information at this time.

Negotiations

Ms. Briggs noted the ratification of the teacher’s contract. The Memorandum of Agreement between the Dedham Education Association and the Dedham Public School was unanimously voted and accepted by the Committee in Executive Session.

Mr. Bilafer motioned to accept the Memorandum of Agreement dated October 10, 2017 between the Dedham Education Association and the Dedham Public Schools through August of 2018, Ms. White second; a roll call vote was taken:

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

Motion passed 7-0.

SBRC

Mr. Bilafer stated the article for the fall town meeting regarding traffic mitigation in front of the new ECEC has been postponed until the spring.

Minutes

Ms. White motioned to approve the minutes of October 19, 2017 as presented, Dr. Pearrow second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Donations

None

Public Comment

None

Acknowledgements and Announcements

Ms. White made special mention of the ECEC Groundbreaking Ceremony, the student volunteers from DMS and DPS who assisted with the Paw Patrol and the Dedham Haunted Pool, as well as the participants in the Drama Club play.

Ms. Briggs made special mention of students Corey Kilroy, Grade 12, and Katarina Uhrmann, Grade 8, who participated in the public presentation of the Adolescent Health Survey. Ms. Briggs also thanked Dr. Pearrow for her presence on the panel.

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

The meeting concluded at 9:22 p.m.