

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

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**MINUTES**

**November 21, 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: Riverdale Elementary School

Meeting commenced at 6:55 p.m.

From 6:30 p.m. to 6:55 p.m. the Committee met with the Riverdale Community.

Gia Farrell, Grade 5, opened the meeting and welcomed the Committee to the Riverdale Elementary School.

**Student Update**

Evan Landry congratulated Abigail Jiminian on being inducted in the National Honor Society last evening. Evan and Abby provided the Committee with an update on happenings and events occurring throughout the Dedham Public Schools.

**Recognitions – Riverdale Student Council**

Despina Grigoriadis, Grade 4, introduced Riverdale Principal Ed Paris. Mr. Paris introduced the Student Council - Krist Rapi, Sophia Bauman, Liam Gunther, Date Guitierrez, Paul Stintmanis, Despina Grigoriadis, Laura Miami and Keira Keogh. The Student Council gave a presentation on

the Riverdale School. Mr. Paris made special mention of the Riverdale PTO - Megan Priest, Gatis Stintmanis, and Debra Willard.

The Committee talked with the students about their recent International Night.

The Committee introduced themselves to the Riverdale Community.

The Committee had an open conversation with the Riverdale students, parents and staff. Student concerns included air conditioning in the classrooms, hot lunches, improvements to fields, hands on learning, handicap accessibility, poor in place playgrounds, lack of a cafeteria, and improvements to bathrooms.

Ms. Briggs thanked the Custodial Staff for the upkeep of the aging school.

Parent and staff concerns included the possibility of the school closing, the schools master plan and where Riverdale falls within that plan, a progressing curriculum, facility improvements, condition of the windows, climate control of the building, updating of the Library, a gifted and talented program, foreign language at the elementary level, improvements to the playground, improvements to the main office (a window opening to the hallway for security), lack of a cafeteria, sustainability of fine arts, and clarification of MCAS results.

Positive feedback included Dedham's technology, Professional Development, and the Foundations Program.

The Committee stated that they are committed to keeping the Riverdale School open.

## **Superintendent's Update**

### **Superintendent Michael J. Welch**

Tomorrow will be a half-day early release to begin Thanksgiving recess. Classes resume Monday, November 27. Thursday, December 7 will be a half day for Professional Development. Friday, December 22 will be a half day to begin the December break.

On November 8 Supt. Welch participated in the Tri-County Superintendents' Roundtable where the conversation centered on a cancer awareness/self-screening program as well as hearing from a representative from the National Alliance for Mental Illness.

On November 16 Supt. Welch attended a meeting of Tri-Valley League superintendents hosted by the Medway Public Schools where the group discussed recent collective bargaining negotiations and trends.

Supt. Welch has continued to meet weekly with small groups of DHS seniors and is hoping to meet with all seniors by the end of the year.

Supt. Welch has been participating in weekly ECEC contractor job site meetings. These have provided insight into the day-to-day progress of the project. As of today the contractor has poured the footings and foundation for the entire Kindergarten wing.

Yesterday Supt. Welch participated in a one-hour webinar for superintendents from across the state regarding the DESE's upcoming "Leading the Nation" celebration. This marketing campaign will be rolling out over the next six months, publicizing the achievements of Massachusetts students.

On November 18, Supt. Welch attended the "Dancing with the Dedham Stars" sponsored by the Dedham Education Partnership.

Last night Supt. Welch welcomed 32 new students into the Dedham High School National Honor Society.

## **Reports**

### MASC Annual Meeting Report

Asst. Superintendent Ian Kelly, Chair Mayanne Briggs, Kevin Coughlin and Dr. Melissa Pearrow attended the MCAS annual meeting which took place from November 1 through November 4. Dr. Kelly explained that the focus of the conference was on college and career readiness. Dr. Pearrow talked about social and emotional themes which also occurred throughout the conference. Mr. Coughlin talked about the accelerated program of the MSBA which will focus on repairing older school buildings. Mr. Coughlin also discussed a seminar he attended about communication with the community and how to handle social media.

### District Restructure Implementation Progress Update

Dr. Kelly provided the committee with an update on the District Restructure. Mr. Paris introduced First Grade Teacher Allie Zahka, Special Education teacher Elizabeth Caruso, Educational Team Leader Jenny McGowan, Instructional Coach Shannon Findley and Interventionist Sue Turner. The group discussed how the coaching cycle works in conjunction with the curriculum, special education, and differentiated classrooms. The group also discussed the positive impact the coaching model has had on student learning. Mr. Paris praised the expertise of his newly-formed leadership team and the support they have given him.

Supt. Welch recognized the hard work and rigorous training the instructional coaches have been through.

Each member of the Committee complimented and thanked the staff members for their hard work, impressive presentation and efforts in putting forth the coaching model in regular education and special education classrooms in just three short months.

Ms. White noted the support of parents and staff in the audience.

Ms. Briggs is happy to see the positive outcome in such a short period and thinks this successful team can be used as a model in other schools.

Jenny McGowan noted she also works at the Greenlodge School and stated that from her perspective the model is working the same at that school.

Dr. Kelly explained how the coaches meet every two weeks to collaborate and brainstorm. The Principals also meet every two weeks as well. Dr. Kelly thanked all of the staff members for their hard work.

Supt. Welch also acknowledged the hard work of the staff. He wants to make sure the coaching model is working before the district proceeds in rolling out a new science curriculum.

The Committee gave the Riverdale staff a round of applause.

## **Old/New Business**

### Discussion and Vote on Wipro Science Education Fellowship, Phase II Grant

Science Department Chair Amy Richard Hill explained to the Committee that Dedham High School Science teacher and WIPRO Science Education Fellow, Adam Smith, was awarded a grant in the amount of \$2,000. Ms. Hill stated that Mr. Smith will use the grant to enhance and support the ongoing district work on curriculum alignment. Mr. Smith will be gathering middle and high school teachers to work on integration and alignment of next generation MCAS science practices from grades 6-12 and build model lessons containing these practices to share with the rest of the staff. Mr. Smith will also be working on increasing the collaboration between middle and high school science staff.

Ms. White motioned to approve with grateful appreciation the Wipro Science Grant in the amount of \$2,000 to work on the vertical alignment of the grades 6-12 science curriculum, Ms. Laprade second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

### Discussion 2018-2019 Calendar

Supt. Welch presented the Committee with first draft of the 2018-2019 school calendar. He highlighted September 1 occurs on a Saturday, the half days for Professional Development and the half day before the December break. He also asked the committee to think about talking to the DEA about having a Professional Development Day on August 30.

Ms. White noted that the half day before December break was implemented because of how bad the traffic was at dismissal time the previous year. She would like to see the impact of this year's half day before deciding on whether or not to schedule a half day on next year's calendar.

### Update on Superintendent Evaluation

Supt. Welch presented the committee with a document from the DESE website which the Committee can fill out to complete his evaluation. He also provided the committee with his goals and previous reviews.

Ms. Briggs asked the Committee to review the rubric and to follow up with any questions.

Mr. Donati asked what he needs to do to assist with the evaluation process. Ms. Briggs stated that each member of the Committee should fill out the rubric and then Mr. Bilafer and Ms. Briggs will compile the data into one document. The rubric should be completed based upon last year's performance. Ms. Briggs then noted that she will fill out the rubric with the Superintendent's goals and will forward it to the Committee for completion.

### Dedication of Foreign Language Lab

Foreign Language Department Chair Alison Guifarro formally invited the Committee and the public to attend the dedication of the Foreign Language Lab in the name of Nancy Bradley

occurring on December 6 at 7:00 p.m. in the High School Library. She noted that with the help of Peter Bradley, a grant will be established in Mrs. Bradley's name.

#### DHS Foreign Exchange Trip to Spain 2018-2019

Ms. Guifarro came before the Committee to ask to change the previously approved foreign exchange trip to Spain from the spring of 2018 to the spring of 2019. Ms Guifarro reviewed the Spanish students visit to Dedham as well as the itinerary and cost of the Dedham students visit to Spain. She asked the School Committee to allow for extra days for travel time.

Ms. Briggs asked Ms. Guifarro to return when the itinerary is finalized and the Committee will vote then on the extra days travel time.

Ms. White motioned to accept the change in dates of the foreign exchange trip from the spring of 2018 to the spring of 2019. Dr. Pearrow second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

### **Subcommittee Reports & Updates**

#### Policy

Ms. Laprade presented the third reading of the Proposed Policy - *Administrative Reports*. The policy is available on the district website. The Policy Subcommittee voted unanimously to accept this policy at their meeting on October 18 and is recommending the board's approval.

Ms. Briggs asked for a motion to approve the School District Annual Report policy, Dr. Pearrow put forth the motion, Mr. Donati second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor. Ms. Laprade noted an error in the vote stating the policy was the Administrative Policy. Ms. Briggs stated the vote will be corrected after the next reading.

Ms Laprade presented the third reading of the proposed policy- *School District Annual Report*. The full policy is available on the DPS Website. The Policy Subcommittee voted unanimously to accept this policy at their meeting on October 18 and is recommending the Board's approval.

Ms. White motioned to approve both new policies - the School District Annual Report policy and the Administrative Reports policy, Mr. Donati second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Ms. Laprade explained the review of the Policy Subcommittees work on policies A, B, C, and D:

- A- *Foundations and Basic commitments*
- B- *Board Governance and Operation*
- C- *General School Administration*
- D- *Fiscal Management*

The Policy Subcommittee voted unanimously to accept these policies at their meeting on October 18 and is recommending the Board's approval.

Mr. Coughlin motioned to approve the edits, changes and updates to policy sections A, B, C, and D, Mr. Bilafer second; the committee voted 6-0 in favor. Dr. Pearrow was not present for the vote.

#### Equity and Inclusion Task Force

Supt. Welch noted the passing of the Human Rights Commission at the recent Town Meeting.

### Negotiations

No new items to discuss.

### SBRC

No new items to discuss.

### Budget Subcommittee

No new items to discuss.

## **Minutes**

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

## **Donations**

The Committee discussed a grant in the amount of \$2,000 from General Dynamics Mission Systems for STEAM activities at the Greenlodge Elementary School.

Dr. Pearrow wanted to know if the grant was just for Greenlodge School or for the District. Mr. Rippin explained the grant was specific to Greenlodge School. Supt. Welch explained the grant was initiated by a Greenlodge parent. Dr. Pearrow would like to see the relationship with General Dynamics facilitated with the whole district.

Ms. Briggs noted this was an opportunity for schools to partner with local businesses.

Mr. Coughlin asked for a clarification on how the grant was going to be used in regards to the term “beehives”. Supt. Welch explained it was for STEAM activities within the classrooms and the term “beehives” refers to robotics.

Mr. Coughlin motioned to accept with grateful appreciation through the efforts of parent Kelly McInerney a grant in the amount of \$2,000 from General Dynamics Mission Systems to expand the STEAM activities at the Greenlodge Elementary School for grades 1-5, Ms. Laprade second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

## **Public Comment**

None

## **Acknowledgements and Announcements**

Ms. Briggs acknowledged Ms. White’s attendance at many of the Veterans Assemblies, the NHS Induction Ceremony as well as the International Night at the Riverdale School.

Mr. Bilafer announced the DEF board met and approved this year's grants. Approval letters should be going out in the next few weeks. The Nancy Bradley Grant will be issued through the DEF and will support world languages. He thanked the Bradley family for its support.

Ms. White asked how many teachers applied for Grants. Dr. Pearrow stated that 26 grants were approved. Mr. Bilafer noted the grants totaled around \$19,000.

Ms. Laprade announced that DCD is hosting speaking engagements between January and April which are free to the public.

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Ms. Briggs stated the need to enter executive session under Exemption 3, Contract Negotiations.

Mr. Bilafer 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

Ms. Briggs announced that the Committee would not be returning to the regular meeting.

Regular meeting ended at 9:14 p.m.