

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

February 6, 2018

(Approved February 13, 2018)

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: Oakdale Elementary School

Meeting commenced at 7:07 p.m.

Student Update

None

Superintendent's Update

Superintendent Michael J. Welch

As of today, the last day of school for DPS students will be Wednesday, June 20. Greenlodge students and staff will have one additional day due to the water main break on January 2. The last day of school for Greenlodge staff and students will be Thursday, June 21.

Supt. Welch shared a letter with the Committee that he received from State Representative Paul McMurtry. Representative McMurtry sent a letter to Governor Baker advocating for additional assistance for the Town of Dedham to provide for the needs of students

relocated from Puerto Rico. Supt. Welch thanked Representative McMurtry for his advocacy.

Supt. Welch provided the School Committee with the FY19 Capital Budget Book that was developed through the Central Office. The book is the result of a cooperative effort of the Facilities, Technology, and Business Departments, in cooperation with the Budget Sub-Committee, to provide a professional, well-coordinated overview of the Committee's capital request for FY19. This publication was distributed in hard copy to all members of the Capital Expenditures Committee as an addendum to the report from the Town's Finance Director in advance of the presentation on Tuesday, February 12.

Last Tuesday was the winter meeting of the DPS Aspiring Leaders Academy where the speaker was Jeff Sudmyer, Superintendent of Achievement First Charter Schools.

Tomorrow night, Wednesday, February 7, is the annual All-Town Band and Chorus Night at Dedham Middle School.

ECEC Principal Dr. Paul Sullivan will be stepping down from his position as principal at the conclusion of this school year. Dr. Sullivan will remain with the district next year to develop a cost-neutral child care and preschool option for Dedham Public Schools faculty which will be located at Dedham High School. The availability of this service will be initially limited to DPS faculty with 4-year-old children, but any surplus of slots may become available to the children of Dedham residents. Dr. Sullivan will also perform outreach to families in Dedham regarding the public schools. Funding for his position and additional staff required to operate this preschool classroom at will come from tuition paid by faculty and families receiving this service.

Supt. Welch has begun having FY19 Budget presentations at each of the seven schools in Dedham to provide a clear context for all faculty and staff regarding the upcoming budget requests and trends in the district.

Reports

STAR360 Universal Screening Student Growth Analytics

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Ian Kelly provided a presentation to the Committee on the STAR360 Universal Screening Tool. The presentation will be available on the Dedham Public Schools district website.

STAR360 is a universal, computer-based screening and progress monitoring tool for students in grades K through 5 in the areas of early literacy, reading and mathematics. It is an adaptive program meeting the needs and challenges of individual students. Dr. Kelly stated this district wide metric tool is an objective, reliable, valid and time efficient program used to monitor student progress, assist in the intervention decision making process and aide in the collection of data. Results from STAR360 assessments are immediate, providing benchmark reports and detailed diagnostic data.

Questions from Committee followed.

Dr. Pearrow inquired about a couple of slides and asked whether the program provided the percent of students who needed additional support. Supt. Welch explained that

approximately 30% of students who were assessed in the fall needed intervention. That number fell to 27% in the winter. The students will be assessed again the spring.

Dr. Pearrow asked whether the numbers included Special Education students. Dr. Kelly explained the test was a universal assessment for all students. Supt. Welch elaborated that about 20 percent of students who took the assessment were on Individual Education Plans.

Mr. Donati inquired into how student growth was measured. Dr. Kelly explained that the program looked at students of the same age with the same growth percentile. Supt. Welch noted that the data catchment is nationwide.

Mr. Donati inquired into the Growth of Proficiency chart. Dr. Kelly explained the median growth is 60 percent with an average score of 80.

Mr. Donati inquired into the Growth of Proficiency chart and asked if there were a way to see positive growth with students who are receiving intervention. Dr. Kelly explained the program just came on board this school year and there has only been two months worth of intervention efforts. He then detailed how STAR360 reports are generated using data from the student database, PowerSchool. Dr. Kelly is currently working on creating the necessary reports to be generated that will provide the most appropriate information for the district. Dr. Kelly stressed the importance of using professional judgment and expertise when analyzing the data.

Ms. Laprade asked how much time students were spending in the classroom taking assessments and how this test differed from the former DRA assessment. Dr. Kelly explained how the STAR360 is a relatively quick exam (approximately 20 minutes) to administer and provides immediate efficient feedback to the teacher. The DRA is a longer more manual, stagnant exam to administer. STAR360 is also adaptable to student progress. It is a more efficient tool for teachers and students with respect to time spent administering.

Dr. Pearrow brought up the School Committee goal around equity and inquired as to how the data was being considered throughout the district. Dr. Kelly explained how the program does have the ability to compare schools. However, those reports need to be built. At this time the Administration is starting with looking at overall student data at the district level.

Mr. Coughlin asked if the STAR360 assessment posed the same type of questions as the MCAS exam. Dr. Kelly explained that the questions for Massachusetts assessments for STAR360 are aligned with the State standards. Thus, the format and content is similar to the MCAS exam.

Ms. White inquired about students' exposure to subject matter and asked at some point in time if a report will be generated to see if one school is performing in a subject area better than another school. Dr. Kelly said yes, but first the curriculum needs to be aligned across the district in all core subjects.

Ms. White also asked whether the assessment will help to determine where an individual student stands in the context of the curriculum. Dr. Kelly explained how the test aligns with the state standards. Another assessment will be needed to see where a child falls within the core contents of the curriculum.

Mr. Bilafer asked how the information was being used by teachers and who is monitoring the information. Dr. Kelly explained that currently, as not to overwhelm the teachers, the information is being compiled by the Instructional Coaches, Interventionists and Curriculum Coordinators. They work with the teachers to utilize the information.

Mr. Bilafer inquired if the parents have seen the information. Dr. Kelly explained that currently they have not. There is a lot involved in interpreting the data. He needs to make sure all professionals have a thorough understanding of the language. The information needs to be conveyed to parents in an informed and thoughtful way. He noted it is a part of a student's record and that parents have the right to the information.

Ms. Briggs asked if reports will be able to be tailored to district needs. Dr. Kelly explained that eventually, yes. He is working on matching the data fields in PowerSchool to the reporting fields in STAR360 so that the appropriate information is accumulated.

Ms. Briggs asked if the reports will be able to be customized for specialists. Dr. Kelly explained that there will be a dashboard created to be able to obtain different information for different needs. Currently Summary Reports are being utilized.

Ms. Briggs noted that the Coaching Model will help to distribute information from the assessments throughout the schools.

Ms. White asked if the assessments were only for elementary grades. Dr. Kelly explained that the STAR360 is a K-12 program. However, the district only purchased the elementary package. He is assessing the needs of the middle school and high school and seeing if it would be worth implementing at the secondary level.

Old/New Business

Discussion on 2018-2019 School Calendar

Ms. Briggs discussed two options for the 2018-2019 school calendar. Option A involved having professional development on August 30 and September 4 with a student start date of September 5. Option B involved having professional development on September 4 and 5 with a student start date of September 6. Ms. Briggs explained if the Committee wished to seek a professional development day prior to September 1, Supt. Welch would need to enter a sidebar agreement with the Dedham Education Association as, contractually, teachers are not bound to start school before September 1. Supt. Welch would need permission from the Committee to move forward with that conversation.

The Committee discussed switching the proposed half day of school on January 11 to January 18.

The Committee discussed the next negotiation meeting with the DEA, which will be on February 13, as a time to have the conversation regarding the start of school.

The Committee discussed the end of the school year and the difference of the last day being only one school calendar day.

Ms. Briggs mentioned that the Commissioner of Education has asked School Committees to discuss starting the school year prior to Labor Day.

Ms. Laprade noted that she had done some research and that of the 50 districts she surveyed about 60% start before Labor Day.

The Committee discussed the impact of snow days on the last day of school.

Ms. Briggs called for a motion to ask for the Superintendent to reach out to the DEA.

Mr. Bilafer motioned to have Superintendent Welch reach out to the Dedham Education Association in regards to a sidebar agreement around starting school prior to September 1, 2018, Ms. Laprade second. Ms. Briggs, Mr. Bilafer and Ms. Laprade voted YES. Dr. Pearrow, Mr. Donati, Mr. Coughlin and Ms. White voted NO. Committee voted 4 to 3, motion denied.

Discussion and Vote on FY19 Proposed Budget

Mr. Coughlin stated last week the Budget Subcommittee met and voted unanimously to support the proposed FY19 budget. Mr. Coughlin thanked the other members of the Subcommittee for their work on the budget.

No further discussion occurred.

Ms. White motioned to approve the FY19 proposed budget of \$42,789, 982, Dr. Pearrow second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Subcommittee Reports & Updates

Policy

The Policy Subcommittee met this evening to review the final steps in approving the new Policy Manual. There are five new proposed policies that the subcommittee voted unanimously to move forward to be presented to the full Committee. The first reading will be next week, February 13. The Policy Subcommittee will meet again next week to vote on more sections to bring in front of the Committee.

Equity and Inclusion Task Force

The Equity and Inclusion Task Force meeting has been cancelled and the next meeting will be March 14, 2018.

SBRC

The next meeting for the SBRC will be February 14, 2018.

Donations

None

Public Comment

None

Acknowledgements and Announcements

Supt. Welch announced that the boys track team won the Tri-Valley Small Conference. He credited the Committee for promoting and approving the move to the Tri-Valley League.

Dr. Pearrow motioned to close the meeting of February 6, 2018, Ms. White second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Regular meeting ended at 8:33 p.m.