

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

February 13, 2018

(Approved March 6, 2018)

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENT:

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

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ABSENT:

Dr. Melissa Pearrow

MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:

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

Meeting Location: Dedham Middle School

Meeting commenced at 7:00 p.m.

Student Update

None

Superintendent's Update

Superintendent Michael J. Welch

As of today Dedham has completed 101 days of the 2017-18 school year. Next week schools will be closed for February vacation from February 19 through February 23.

Last night Supt. Welch, Asst. Supt. for Business and Finance Sam Rippin, Technology Director Don Langenhorst and Facilities Director Denise Moroney presented the FY19 Capital Budget to the Capital Expenditures Committee. Supt. Welch stated he appreciated the support of the committee members who attended the meeting.

The School Department along with Town Facilities, Fire, Police and Public Works have been working cooperatively on a comprehensive public safety presentation regarding exterior cameras being installed at all town and school buildings. The cameras would be accessible and viewable to public safety personnel.

The proposal is the result of more than a year's worth of monthly meetings between all parties. The proposal was presented outside of the schools' FY19 Capital Budget, but it was collectively endorsed by all Town departments involved. Supt. Welch noted his appreciation to all the departments involved in developing this plan.

Due to last week's snow storm, the All-Town Band Concert will take place tomorrow, Wednesday, February 14 in the gym at Dedham High School at 7:00pm.

The Supt. provided the Committee with a map of the cancellations and early releases of surrounding communities for Wednesday, February 7, 2018, an inclement weather day. Many schools either had a preplanned half day or called for an early dismissal in anticipation of the storm. Based on frequent conversations with DPW Director Joe Flanagan, Supt. Welch chose to schedule a regular school day, but released the high school 40 minutes early and the middle school 25 minutes early so that buses would not be increasingly late to their afternoon runs.

Supt. Welch provided the Committee with a history of dates of school closures due to snow during his tenure in Dedham. It shows that February is the month that routinely has the most snow day cancellations. Over the past three years there has been an average of four snow cancellation days per year.

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

On February 7, Supt. Welch attended the Trust Fund Commission's meeting at Town Hall. At this meeting the Commission voted to approve 52 Dedham High School scholarships for the Class of 2018 worth a total of \$72,000.

On February 9, Mr. Bilafer and Supt. Welch attended The Education Collaborative (TEC) Annual Legislative Breakfast held at Framingham High School. Representative Paul McMurtry was also in attendance.

Yesterday, Technology Director Don Langenhorst was able to incorporate the Superintendent's regular Twitter feed (@MJWelchDedham) onto the main page of the Dedham Public Schools website. It is located in the lower left hand corner of the page.

Supt. Welch extended congratulations to seven elementary students who were selected to participate in the All-State Treble Chorus. The students attended their first rehearsal at Algonquin High School this past Saturday, along with their Music teachers Sara Allen and Gabby Zimbardo. They will be performing at the All-State MMEA performance on Saturday, March 3 at 1:00pm.

Reports

Quarterly Budget Report

Assistant Superintendent for Business and Finance Sam Rippin provided the Committee with an update on the status of the FY18 budget.

Mr. Rippin explained there are more expenses associated with second quarter spending due to the increase in the payment of salaries. He reviewed how ten month employees began receiving paychecks in September and the impact of those employee salaries on the second quarter numbers versus the salaries of full year employees in the first quarter.

Mr. Rippin also explained that there were budget transfers in the second quarter due to changes in the Department of Education's requirements in the Chart of Accounts (financial requirements). The accounts have been reconciled to the new standards of reporting. Mr. Rippin thanked Accountant Lina Sun for all of her hard work and efforts in this process.

Mr. Rippin reviewed the Facilities Budget and explained how most maintenance work is done in the summer impacting the first quarter numbers more than the second quarter. He also mentioned that utilities are fully encumbered at the beginning of the fiscal year. Mr. Rippin anticipates that the facilities budget will finish in a balanced position.

Mr. Rippin provided a FY18 Budget narrative as of December 31, 2017 to the Committee. He noted that school spending has ramped up as the school year has gotten underway, Out of District tuitions are stable, and ELL Services (English Language Learners) spending has increased due to displaced students from Puerto Rico entering the district. He stated the State has appropriated funds to address the issue, but he does not know if, when or how much money Dedham will receive.

Mr. Coughlin thanked Mr. Rippin for all of his hard work and accuracy with the budget numbers. He asked if the budget transfers will occur next year. Mr. Rippin stated no, that the FY19 Budget reflects the new Chart of Accounts.

There were no further comments from the Committee.

Old/New Business

Discussion on 2018-2019 School Calendar

There were no questions and no further discussion on the draft of the 2018-2019 school calendar.

Subcommittee Reports & Updates

Policy

Ms. Laprade summarized the first reading of five new proposed policies that were unanimously voted by the Policy Subcommittee to present to the full Committee. The policies will be posted to the district website and will be included at the end of the minutes. The policies are:

- GBGE - Domestic Violence Leave Policy
- IHAI - Occupational Education
- IHBAA - Observations of Special Education Programs
- IMG - Animals in School
- JFABC - Admission of Transfer Students

Budget

The next Finance Committee meeting will be on March 7. Mr. Coughlin asked for employee and community support as the budget process moves forward.

Equity and Inclusion Task Force

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, March 14.

Negotiations

The first negotiation meeting with the Dedham Education Association and Unit A members took place this afternoon. This meeting involved the discussion of setting ground rules. The next meeting will be in March. Supt. Welch thanked the Negotiation Subcommittee for their work.

SBRC

The next meeting for the SBRC will be tomorrow night, February 14. The new ECEC building is progressing on schedule.

Minutes

Ms. White motioned to approve the minutes of January 30, 2018 as presented, Mr. Donati second; the Committee voted 6-0 in favor. Ms. Laprade abstained as she was not in attendance at the meeting on January 20.

Ms. White motioned to approve the minutes of February 6, 2018 as presented, Mr. Bilafer second; the Committee voted 6-0 in favor.

Donations

Ms. Laprade motioned to approve with grateful appreciation two grants in the amount of \$7,500 each (total \$15,000) from No Hungry Kids-Share Our Strength funded by Amazon to support the expansion of the Food Service Breakfast Programs at the Oakdale and Riverdale Elementary Schools, Mr. Donati second; the Committee voted 6-0 in favor.

Mr. Rippin credited Food Service Director Jeanne Johnson for her efforts in securing these grants.

Public Comment

None

Acknowledgements and Announcements

Supt. Welch announced the DHS boys' track team tied for first place in the Tri-Valley Small Conference. The boys' basketball team is currently in first place. The wrestling team also won the Tri-Valley Championship, the MIAA Division 3 Central Sectional Championship and will be going to the State tournament.

Ms. White announced Wayne Sayers, DHS Wrestling Coach, won the Tri-Valley coach award at the Central Sectionals.

Ms. White motioned to close the meeting of February 13, 2018, Ms. Laprade second; the Committee voted 6-0 in favor.

Meeting concluded at 7:38 p.m.

New Proposed Policies

File: GBGE

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Dedham Public School District to permit an employee to take up to 15 days of domestic violence leave from work in any 12-month period. In order to be eligible for said leave:

- (i) the employee, or a family member of the employee must be a victim of abusive behavior;
- (ii) the employee must be using the leave from work to seek or obtain medical attention, counseling, victim services or legal assistance; secure housing; obtain a protective order from court; appear before a grand jury; meet with a district attorney or other law enforcement official; or attend child custody proceedings or address other issues directly related to the abusive behavior against the employee or family member of the employee; and
- (iii) the employee must not be the perpetrator of the abusive behavior against such employee's family member.

The employer shall have the sole discretion to determine whether this leave shall be paid or unpaid. An employee seeking such leave shall exhaust all annual or vacation leave, personal leave and sick leave available to the employee, prior to requesting or taking domestic violence leave, unless the employer waives this requirement.

Except in cases of imminent danger to the health or safety of an employee, advanced notice of domestic violence leave shall be required. If such imminent danger exists the employee shall notify the employer within 3 workdays that the leave was taken. The notification may be communicated to the employer by the employee, a family member of the employee or the employee's counselor, social worker, health care worker, member of the clergy, shelter worker, legal advocate or other professional who has assisted the employee in addressing the effects of the abusive behavior. If an unscheduled absence occurs, an employer shall not take any negative action against the employee if the employee, within 30 days from the unauthorized absence or within 30 days from the employee's last unauthorized absence in the instance of consecutive days of unauthorized absences, provides any of the documentation found in (1) to (7) below. An employer may require documentation that the employee or employee's family member has been a victim of abusive behavior and that the leave is consistent with clauses (i) to (iii) as above referenced; provided, however, that an employer shall not require an employee to show evidence of an arrest, conviction, or other law enforcement documentation for such abusive behavior. The documentation shall be provided to the employer within a reasonable period after the employer requests it.

An employee shall satisfy this documentation requirement by providing anyone of the following documents to the employer:

- (1) a protective order, order of equitable relief or other documentation issued by a court of competent jurisdiction as a result of abusive behavior against the employee or employee's family member;
- (2) a document under the letterhead of the court, provider or public agency which the employee attended for the purposes of acquiring assistance as it relates to the employee or family member;
- (3) A police report or statement of a victim or witness provided to police documenting the abusive behavior;
- (4) documentation that the perpetrator of the abusive behavior has admitted to sufficient facts to support a finding of guilt; or has been convicted of, or has been adjudicated a juvenile delinquent by reason of any offense constituting abusive behavior;
- (5) medical documentation of treatment as a result of the abusive behavior;
- (6) a sworn statement, signed under the penalties of perjury, provided by a counselor, social worker, health care worker, member of the clergy, shelter worker, legal advocate or other professional who has assisted the employee in addressing the effects of the abusive behavior;
- (7) a sworn statement, signed under the penalties of perjury, from the employee attesting that the employee has been a victim of or is a family member of a victim of abusive behavior.

All information related to the employee's leave shall be kept confidential and shall not be disclosed, except to the extent that disclosure is:

- (i) requested or consented to, in writing, by the employee;
- (ii) ordered to be released by a court of competent jurisdiction;
- (iii) otherwise required by applicable federal or state law;
- (iv) required in the course of an investigation authorized by law enforcement, including, but not limited to, an investigation by the Attorney General; or
- (v) necessary to protect the safety of the employee or others employed at the workplace.

The Superintendent shall ensure that notice is provided to all employees in the next school year and beyond by appropriately amending the district's employee handbooks, by whatever title they may be known, or by direct notice about the Domestic Violence Law and securing the employees signature acknowledging receipt of the handbook/notice. The Superintendent shall be responsible for notifying all current employees, unless they have been notified through the handbook, of this policy in a manner that he/she deems appropriate.

No employer shall coerce, interfere with, restrain or deny the exercise of, or any attempt to exercise, any rights provided herein or to make leave requested or taken contingent upon whether or not the victim maintains contact with the alleged abuser. No employer shall discharge or in any other manner discriminate against an employee for exercising the employee's rights under law. The taking of domestic violence leave shall not result in the loss of any employment benefit accrued prior to the date of such leave. Upon the employee's return from such leave, he/she shall be entitled to restoration to the employee's original job or to an equivalent position. Definitions of 'abuse', 'abusive behavior', 'domestic violence', 'employees' and 'family members' may be found in the laws referenced below.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 149:52E; Section 10
Chapter 260 of the Acts of 2014

OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

The Dedham School Committee recognizes that students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 should:

1. Be afforded the opportunity to be informed about the world of work.
2. Be aware of the many vocations available to them.
3. Develop a respect for the dignity of work.
4. Be allowed the opportunity to develop an understanding regarding the technical, consumer, occupational, recreational and cultural aspects of industry and technology; they should also be afforded the opportunity to develop skills related to such aspects through creative problem-solving experiences.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:37K; 71:38A through 71:38F; 74:1 et seq.
603 CMR 4.00

OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

1. Parents' request to observe their child(ren), current program, or a potential placement must be made at least five days in advance with the Special Education Director or designee and/or Principal.
2. The Special Education Director or designee shall contact the parent(s) for initial scheduling conversation within five (5) days of receipt of the parents' request.
3. When a parent requests an observation of a special needs student or program, the Special Education Director or designee will seek approval from the Director of Special Education and the building principal before it is processed. Such approval may only be withheld for those reasons outlined within law and DESE regulation.
4. The Special Education Director or designee and/or Principal will work with the classroom teacher and the observer to set up the specifics of the observation (including, but not limited to, scheduling and placement of the observer in the classroom).
5. The number, frequency, and duration of observation periods will be determined on an individual student basis in accordance with law and regulation. The start and end time of observation periods and a schedule of observation periods will be stated in advance. In order to minimize classroom or student disruption, the length of individual observation periods may be limited.
6. If the observer is not the parent, the parent must sign a release for the individual to observe.

7. The number of observers at any one time may be limited.
8. The observer will be informed that he/she is not to interfere with the educational environment of the classroom. If his/her presence presents a problem, he/she will be asked to leave. This notice is particularly important, since the presence of parents can influence both the performance of their child(ren) and those of others.
9. The observer will be asked to submit his/her report of the observation in advance of any follow-up TEAM meeting.
10. The observer will be informed that he/she is there to evaluate the appropriateness of a specific educational program to meet the needs of an individual child. He/she is not there to evaluate a teacher's ability to perform his or her contractual job duties.
11. The observer will be instructed regarding the disclosure of confidential or personally identifiable information relating to other children. Staff must be mindful of removing materials which may be part of students' records from plain view. In the event that removal is not possible the observer may be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement.
12. A school administrator, or designee, also will observe at the same time and take notes as to what is observed, paying particular attention to note anything that is non-typical concerning the period. This observation summary will be placed in the student's file and provided to the parent(s) prior to any follow-up TEAM meeting.

LEGAL REF: MGL 71B:3
 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Technical Assistance
 Advisory SPED 2009-2 dated January 8, 2009

CROSS REF: KI, Visitors to Schools

File: IMG

ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

No animal, except for service animals, shall be brought to school without prior permission of the building Principal.

The Dedham Public School District is committed to providing a high quality educational program to all students in a safe and healthy environment.

School Principals, in consultation with the Health Services Providers in each building, shall utilize the Department of Public Health publication "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and review student health records to determine which animals may be allowed in the school building. The decision of the Principal shall be final.

Educational Program

Use of animals to achieve specific curriculum objectives may be allowed by the building Principal provided student health and safety is not jeopardized and the individual requesting that the animal be brought to school is responsible

for adhering to the "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and any other conditions established by the Principal to protect the health and well-being of students.

Student Health

The health and well-being of students is the District's highest priority. Animals may cause an allergic reaction or otherwise impair the health of students. No animals may be brought to school or kept in the school, classroom, office or common area that may negatively impact the health of any student who must utilize that area. Animals that cause an allergic reaction or impair the health of students shall be removed from the school immediately so that no student shall have his/her health impaired and each student shall have full access to available educational opportunities.

Animals Prohibited from School

Rabies is a growing problem and any fur-bearing animal is susceptible to this very serious fatal disease. Infected animals can transmit this disease to students and staff. Based on the Massachusetts Departments of Health and Education recommendations the following animals are prohibited from schools within the School District.

Wild Animals and Domestic Stray Animals - Because of the high incidence of rabies in bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes and other wild carnivores, these animals should not be permitted in school buildings under any circumstances (including dead animals).

Fur-Bearing Animals (pet dogs,* cats, wolf-hybrids, ferrets, etc.) - These animals may pose a risk for transmitting rabies, as well as parasites, fleas, other diseases and injuries.

Bats - Bats pose a high risk for transmitting rabies. Bat houses should not be installed on school grounds and bats should not be brought into the school building.

Poisonous Animals - Spiders, venomous insects and poisonous snakes, reptiles and lizards are prohibited for safety reasons.

***Exception: Guide, Hearing and Other Service Dogs or Law Enforcement Dogs** - These animals may be allowed in school or on school grounds with proof of current rabies vaccination.

Exceptions may be made with the prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

Service Animals (Guide or Assistance Dogs)

The Dedham School Committee does not permit discrimination against individuals with disabilities, including those who require the assistance of a service animal. The District will comply with Massachusetts law concerning the rights of persons with guide or assistance dogs and with federal law and will permit such animals on school premises and on school transportation.

For purposes of this policy, a "service animal includes any dog that has been individually trained to do the work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability." The regulations further state that "a public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with the disability."

Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that individuals with disabilities cannot perform themselves. Service animals are not pets. There are several kinds of service animals that assist individuals with disabilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, animals that:

- assist individuals who are blind or have severe sight impairments as "seeing eye dogs" or "guide dogs;"

- alert individuals with hearing impairments to sounds;
- pull wheelchairs or carry and pick-up items for individuals with mobility impairments; and
- assist mobility-impaired individuals with balance.

The District shall not assume or take custody or control of, or responsibility for, any service animal or the care or feeding thereof. The owner or person having custody and control of the animal shall be liable for any damage to persons, premises, property, or facilities caused by the service animal, including, but not limited to, clean up, stain removal, etc.

If, in the opinion of the School Principal or authorized designee, any service animal is not in the control of its handler, or if it is not housebroken, the service animal may be excluded from the school or program. The service animal can also be excluded if it presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school. The parent or guardian of the student having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the service animal from District premises immediately.

If any student or staff member assigned to the classroom in which a service animal is permitted suffers an allergic reaction to the animal, the person having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the animal to a different location designated by the Building Principal or designee and an alternative plan will be developed with appropriate District staff. Such plan could include the reassignment of the person having custody and control of the animal to a different classroom. This will also apply if an individual on school transportation suffers an allergic reaction. In this case, an alternate plan will be developed in coordination with appropriate school, District, and transportation staff including the involvement of the parents/guardian of the student.

When a student will be accompanied by a service animal at school or in other District facilities on a regular basis, such staff member or such student's parent or guardian, as well as the animal's owner and any other person who will have custody and control of the animal will be required to sign a document stating that they have read and understood the foregoing.

The Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee shall be responsible for developing procedures to accommodate a student's use of an assistance animal in District facilities and on school transportation vehicles.

LEGAL REF 28 CFR, Part 35

File: JFABC

ADMISSION OF TRANSFER STUDENTS

The Dedham School District will enroll and place students who have left Commonwealth charter schools by adhering to the same policies and procedures in place for any other student enrolling in the school district including, but not limited to, examination of the course of study and level of academic attainment of the student when determining the student's appropriate grade placement or eligibility for high school graduation.

To the same extent provided for other students enrolling in the school district, students who enroll in the school district from a Commonwealth charter school shall be subject to the graduation requirements of the school district, may have certain graduation requirements waived, and may make-up certain graduation requirements.

LEGAL REFS: Chapter 12, Section 11 of the Acts of 2010

