

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

May 1, 2018

(Approved May 15, 2018)

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Steve Bilafer, Chair
Kevin Coughlin, Vice-Chair
Mayanne Briggs
Joshua Donati
Lisa Laprade
Dr. 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 7:02 p.m.

Student Update

None

Recognitions

Supt. Welch recognized Jim Forrest as the newly appointed Principal of Dedham High School. Mr. Forrest served as Interim Principal for the 2017-2018 school year. Mr. Forrest thanked the High School staff, Supt. Welch and the Committee for their support and spoke about his vision for Dedham High School.

Supt. Welch recognized Kimberly Taylor as the new Principal of the Early Childhood Education Center. Mrs. Taylor spoke about the interview process, thanked her Dedham Public Schools colleagues for their warm welcome, and the Committee for this opportunity.

Superintendent's Update

During the month of May educators will be meeting with their supervisors in summative evaluation meetings. Educators will be uploading evidence, reviewing progress toward their goals, and revisiting their previous evaluations. Supervisors will be meeting personally with all their direct reports to review information and provide formative or summative evaluations.

On Wednesday and Thursday of last week Supt. Welch attended the 2nd annual *Emerging Best Practices: Preventing and Addressing Bias Based Incidents in Schools* conference sponsored by the Boston Public Schools. Joining him were Riverdale Principal Ed Paris, DHS Assistant Principal Ron Sudmyer, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Ian Kelly, and Math Dept. Chair Kristine Holloran. The group heard from regional and national leaders in bias reduction practices and how to improve equity in all schools for all students.

On Friday of last week Supt. Welch filmed another edition of "Ask the Superintendent" with Brian Kerby on Dedham Cable TV.

Also on Friday Supt. Welch participated in a regional Superintendents' Discussion at William James College with colleagues from Newton, Cambridge, Winchester, Canton, Revere, Needham, and Billerica.

In preparation for the Committee's scheduled School Choice vote at the next meeting on May 15, Supt. Welch provided the Committee with an email from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. This year DESE will be collecting district school choice decision by way of a survey. In FY18 Dedham had four students opt out of the district which resulted in a net loss of funding of \$72,111.

Tonight is the 3rd Annual DHS Debate Team Awards Night at Dedham High School. Supt. Welch thanked Debate Team Advisor Mike Medeiros for his investment in the training and development of these students. The group received the Top New School Award at this year's MA Speech and Debate League event.

Ms. Briggs requested a copy of the school choice district map that was provided to the Committee last year.

Reports

District Restructure Implementation and Progress Update by Asst. Supt. Ian Kelly

Dr. Kelly introduced Avery School Coach Allison Kieffner and Interventionist Kaeli Rathmann.

Allison Kieffner described her new role as an Instructional Coach. Ms. Kieffner provided the committee with a handout of a monthly calendar she uses to organize her services to teachers. She reviewed how she works with teachers and supports students in achieving their goals. She stated two specific examples of her coaching intervention. She is very happy with the progress of the coaching model.

Kaeli Rathmann described how she has been working with students on reading skills. She brought in books that she uses in her work for the Committee to view. She also described the collaboration with the interventionists in the other schools.

Mr. Donati asked Ms. Kieffner if she works with every teacher in the school. Ms. Kieffner explained that she offers her services to all classroom teachers, special education teachers and specialists. She has received a positive response overall to the coaching model. Mr. Donati asked how often she met with teachers. Ms. Kieffner explained how she tries to meet with those she is working with at least once a week. Mr. Donati asked how she checks back in after a goal is accomplished. Ms. Kieffner explained that this is a more informal process. She has established a good relationship with her colleagues which she feels makes her easily approachable. She also gives out lots of resources. Mr. Donati mentioned that one of the challenges of being a Coach is that sometimes teachers feel like they are being judged. He asked Ms. Kieffner how she manages this aspect of the role. Ms. Kieffner stated that she always approaches a situation from the point of view of the student. Her process is student centered. She does not provide the teacher with feedback unless they specific ask for it.

Dr. Pearrow asked Ms. Kieffner how a situation is handled if the data provided differs from her point of view. Ms. Kieffner explained that the teachers have access to the same data she does and she lets them decide on what they want to work on. She does not make these types of decisions for the teacher.

Ms. Briggs asked both women if they feel they received enough professional development. Both Ms. Kieffner and Ms. Rathmann feel the professional development has been appropriate and successful. Ms. Kieffner also mentioned how she meets regularly with the other Instructional Coaches in the district for support.

Ms. White asked if there is a sharing of ideas among colleagues. Ms. Kieffner stated that ideas are shared all the time among the Instructional Coaches. They also work with Martha Winokur, a Literacy Coach, who has been a great mentor to the group. Ms. White asked Ms. Kieffner to share an experience that worked well or didn't work as well as she expected. Ms. Kieffner stated she had been through a great deal of training on how to interact with teachers who are adverse to the Coaching Model. She was pleasantly surprised that she did not have to use that training and that the teachers have been receptive to her.

Mr. Coughlin noted he was pleased to see the coaches and teachers working so well together and the focus on student learning.

Mr. Bilafer was happy to hear about the collaboration across the district. He asked both educators to come to the Committee if there was anything they needed.

Supt. Welch noted he has been impressed with direct intervention and appreciates the work been done around the district.

Dr. Kelly commended the staff on how far they have come in a year and the collaborative work being done. He stated there is now common curriculum language being used across the district.

Superintendent's Proposed Goals for 2018-2019

Supt. Welch proposed the following goals to the Committee for their review and feedback.

Professional Practice Goals

1) Attend, present, and participate in available regional and statewide educational leadership organizations and professional development opportunities to better evaluate and incorporate statewide "best practices" in the Dedham Public Schools.

1. Summer, Mid-Winter, and Spring M.A.S.S. Superintendent Meetings/Conferences
2. M.A.S.C./M.A.S.S. Annual Fall Convention
3. Monthly Tri-County Superintendent Roundtables

4. Monthly T.E.C. Superintendent Meetings
5. Bi-Monthly Superintendents Meetings with Teachers21 and William James College

2) Support the development of two new District Principals and all 13 other direct reports to the Superintendent through bi-monthly school and departmental observations of practice and mentoring meetings. Complete comprehensive goal development and observational visits with principals at all schools in September-October 2018. Perform mid-cycle reviews in January-February 2019, and summative evaluations in June-July 2019. Provide comprehensive feedback to all principals and directors during visits.

Student Learning Goal

1) Provide training to all Leadership Team members and educators regarding the new MA District and School Accountability System. Continue to use all available state and local data to evaluate the effectiveness of educational services delivered throughout the district. Expand the use of universal screenings (STAR 360) as a tool for targeted student interventions. Analyze and promote understanding of district, school, grade-level, and student growth measures as a focal point for increases in student learning.

District Improvement Goals

- 1) Work with district leadership team and the Dedham Education Association to review and revise the 2015 Educator Evaluation Handbook to more closely align with best practices and a focus on improved educator practice.
- 2) Work collaboratively with Dedham Police, Fire, and EMS Personnel to update, distribute, and provide professional development training for all staff on a comprehensive district-wide emergency response and communications plan.
- 3) Research and develop a comprehensive district-wide marketing/promotional campaign that adequately showcases the many positive initiatives undertaken in the district. This system will regularly provide these communications via direct public appearances as well as conventional and electronic means including social media, websites, cable television, and email.
- 4) Support the Early Childhood Education Center's faculty, staff, and students as they transition to the opening of a new school in winter 2019. Provide a well articulated roadmap for planning and completing this move with minimal disruption and maximum support.

The committee will review the goals and provide feedback to Supt. Welch. The goals will be approved at an upcoming meeting.

Town-School Safety & Security Collaboration Progress Update by Supt. Welch

Supt. Welch explained how the school department has been working collaboratively with other town safety departments. The Communications Infrastructure Task Force has been meeting regularly since September 2016. This group developed the plan for the installation of security cameras around all town buildings.

Supt. Welch discussed the development of a safety team that has been meeting since September. He provided the Committee with the following statement:

In September 2017 police visited all Dedham schools to discuss plans for emergency drills. Faculty/staff expressed concern about the developmental appropriateness of the drills and also raised additional concerns about areas not sufficiently covered in the annually scheduled typical drills. Superintendent spoke with Police Chief and agreed to have more focused discussions to develop a comprehensive emergency plan with clearly articulated procedures. The collaborative goal is a well planned sequence of developmentally appropriate and thoughtful trainings for faculty/staff and students accompanied by a detailed set of written procedures that are well understood by all.

The safety team has been established to develop consistent procedures to provide to all teachers. Supt. Welch did not feel it was appropriate to publically release any specific details regarding these procedures due to safety reasons.

Mr. Bilafer stated that this was important work and at the forefront of everyone's mind. He knows people want to hear about safety and that the Committee needs to find an appropriate way to inform the community.

Supt. Welch thanked Chief D'Entremont and the Police Department's Technology Specialist Kevin Coleman for installing applications that allow school principals to have direct access to police. He also thanked Jake Lee from Fallon Ambulance for his contributions to the group.

Dr. Pearrow stated she was glad to see that Director of Counseling Services Ashley Dubé was on the safety team and that emotional safety is being made part of the conversation.

Old/New Business

Discussion & Approval of Town/School Cost Sharing Agreement by Asst. Supt. Sam Rippin

Mr. Rippin provided the Committee with the independent audit of the end of year report. The audit is a requirement of the Department of Education. The only finding was the lack of a written cost share agreement between the School Committee and the Board of Selectman to determine methodology for the allocation of shared costs. Mr. Rippin has been working with the Town's Finance Director Andrea Terkelsen, and together they agreed upon a proportional cost share agreement. He provided the committee with a copy of said agreement. Mr. Rippin reviewed the list of shared costs and allocations with the Committee. He explained the agreement would need to be voted and signed by both parties, the School Committee and the Board of Selectman.

Supt. Welch explained how the cost share proportion goes into the per pupil expenditure calculation. This document helps to explain why the number is so high.

Mr. Rippin stated he feels the document has integrity and asked the Committee to vote for this agreement.

Ms. Laprade asked if other towns' per pupil expenditures have the same numbers factored in. Mr. Rippin stated, yes, but noted that Dedham has a higher employer/employee health coverage split than most communities. He also noted that Dedham values neighborhood schools which are more expensive to run.

Mr. Bilafer felt the workers compensation percentage seemed high. Mr. Rippin explained this line was determined by job classifications, net worth of property and included the food service department.

Supt. Welch stated this is the first cost share agreement between the school and town and it is a starting point for future bargaining. He also noted this was the only audit finding and he is impressed with the work of Mr. Rippin and his department.

Ms. Briggs motioned to accept and approve the Cost Share Agreement between the Dedham School Committee and the Board of Selectman as presented, Ms. Laprade second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Human Rights Commission Nomination & Vote

Mr. Coughlin motioned to nominate Mayanne Briggs as the School Committee representative to the Human Rights Commission, Ms. White second; the Committee voted 6-0 in favor.

Subcommittee Reports & Updates

Policy

Ms. Laprade has inquired with the MASC in regards to hosting the Policy Manual online. There is a onetime upload and support fee of \$3,500 with an annual renewal fee of \$900 per year. The MASC has not increased this fee in nine years and does not anticipate a future increase. Ms. Laprade also researched the features and search function of the online manual.

Mr. Rippin inquired if there was any leeway with the \$3,500 fee since Dedham was a new customer and the Policy Manual review was completed way under the anticipated finish date. Ms. Laprade stated she would inquire with the MASC.

Ms. Briggs note there are only 70 out of 400 school districts currently using the online hosting site. She would like to see what can be done in-house first.

Mr. Bilafer asked if the site were available for anyone to view. Ms. Laprade answered yes. She explained that it is a lot of manual work to keep up with the policy updates.

Mr. Bilafer stated the Committee will take some time to think about it.

Budget

None

Equity and Inclusion Task Force

The next meeting will be on May 9 at the Middle School.

Negotiations

The next negotiation session with Unit A members will be tomorrow, May 2.

SBRC

Ms. Briggs explained there was a meeting today to discuss the interior color pallets. Mr. Bilafer stated there have been some change orders that he will hear about at Monday's SBRC meeting.

Minutes

None

Donations

Ms. White motioned to approve with grateful appreciation two donations in the amount of \$800 each (total of \$1,600) from Performing Arts Consultants to support the Dedham Public Schools Music Department, Ms. Briggs second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Public Comment

None

Acknowledgements and Announcements

Ms. Laprade mentioned that tomorrow evening, May 2, there will be a presentation called “The Truth about Vaping” at 7:00pm at Dedham Middle School.

Ms. White motioned to adjourn the meeting of May 1, 2018, Mr. Donati second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

The meeting concluded at 8:42 p.m.