

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

June 6, 2018

(Approved June 19, 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 7:00 p.m.

Student Update

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

Recognitions

Superintendent Welch recognized Assistant Superintendent for Business & Finance Sam Rippin for being awarded the John F. Conway Distinguished Service Award from the Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials, sponsored by KenMark Office Systems. Kenneth Pedicini from KenMark was in attendance to present Mr. Rippin with a \$1,000 award to the Dedham Public Schools. Mr. Rippin announced the funds will be used to provide gift cards to students with financial needs during the holiday season. Mr. Rippin will work with the Dedham Youth Commission for this objective.

The Committee recognized students from the Oakdale Elementary School and the Greenlodge Elementary School who scored impressive grades on the New England Math League assessment and those students who participated in the Math Olympiad program. Math Consultant Nancy Clement, Principal Holli Caulfield and Principal Ashley Bodkins presented certificates to the students in attendance.

Superintendent Welch introduced the new English Language Arts Department Chair, Brenda Hagan. Ms. Hagan spoke to the Committee about her background and qualifications. The Committee welcomed Ms. Hagan to the district.

Superintendent's Update

Dedham's Annual Town Meeting was held on Monday, May 21. The FY19 School Department Operating Budget was passed. Other articles impacting the schools also passed including the new ECEC traffic mitigation measures (\$563,000), exterior school security cameras, and the update to the School Department's Facilities Master Plan (\$125,000). Supt. Welch stated he greatly appreciated the continued support of the School Committee, Finance Committee, Town Manager, and Town Meeting members.

On June 2, Dedham High School held its graduation ceremony for the Class of 2018.

Supt. Welch thanked Principal Jim Forrest and all the faculty and staff at DHS for the Top Seniors Dinner at MIT Endicott House on May 29 and Class Night on May 31. He also thanked the DHS Booster's Club for the Athletic Spring Sports Awards Night on June 4.

Supt. Welch thanked the Committee members who participated in town wide Government Day on May 22. About twenty high school students were able to experience many different facets of town and school government by shadowing officials on that day. He also thanked Social Studies Department Chair Andrew Morton for his help in organizing the event.

On May 25, Supt. Welch announced the appointment of the new Dedham Public Schools English Language Arts Department Chair, Brenda Hagan.

The assistant principal search process at Dedham High School continues to progress with the four finalists selected by the interview committee scheduled to spend a day at Dedham High School later this week and next. Principal Jim Forrest is expected to make a decision before the end of the year. Supt. Welch recognized Interim Assistant Principal Ron Sudmyer for his work at the high school throughout the 2017-2018 school year.

Principals and directors are hiring in preparation for next fall. Supt. Welch noted there are very few hires to make and is expecting that most of the openings will be filled before the end of June.

Supt. Welch provided the School Committee members with a copy of the electronic entry he made to the Department of Elementary & Secondary Education documenting the district's vote at the May 15 meeting to NOT participate in the state's school choice program. The vote was due from all school districts by June 1.

On June 12, the high school will be holding its first Community Service Fair. This event is sponsored by the National Honor Society and the DHS Guidance Department. On June 14, DHS

will also sponsor a “Reality Fair” for juniors to experience the realities of balancing a budget and matching expenses to income. Both of these are coordinated with the help of DHS Career Counselor Ashley Mansfield.

The Central Office is preparing for the annual two-day end of the school year Leadership Retreat on June 27 and 28. The entire leadership team will be meeting to discuss progress from 2017-18 and prepare professional development work and initiatives for the 2018-19 school year.

Supt. Welch will be unable to attend the June 14 Flag Day parade due to a previous commitment.

DHS History Teacher Mike Medeiros and students from US History I Honors class have been working on a project called the Dedham Storytellers. Students interviewed senior citizens around town and wrote essays comparing Dedham’s past to present. A short documentary film was produced by Dedham TV chronicling the project.

Supt. Welch provided some photos to the Committee of the work occurring at Dedham Middle School to improve Loewen Field. This has been a collaborative effort with Parks and Recreation (Bob Stanley, Deb Anderson, and Bob Zahka), Facilities (Denise Moroney, Steve MacDonald, Charlie Baker, and Amy Colleran), Dedham Girls Softball (Frank Bollotte and Mike Nosky), Department of Public Works (Joe Flanagan and his staff), the Building Inspector (Ken Cimen), and Athletics Director (Steve Traister). Improvements include a new storage shed, handicap accessible sidewalk, batting/pitching cage area, and a new scoreboard, due to arrive sometime next month. There are also plans to add a handicap accessible grandstand.

Construction continues at the site of the new ECEC. Drywall is going up in the kindergarten wing, the concrete floor is being poured in the last third of the building on Monday, and the roof is being completed in the preschool wing this week.

Supt. Welch has been meeting regularly with a committee from the ECEC discussing preparations for the upcoming move. The Project Manager has been very helpful in this planning. Supt. Welch and Principal Paul Sullivan met with the entire faculty to discuss this process on May 23.

Ms Laprade asked how the purging process was going at the current ECEC and if there were anything the Committee could do to help. Supt. Welch explained the staff is planning to get a lot of this work accomplished on June 25.

Reports

DPS Facilities & Usage Fees

Director of Facilities Denise Moroney and Assistant Superintendent for Business & Finance Sam Rippin presented. The presentation will be available on the district website.

The presentation included information on the rollout of "FS Direct", the new online facilities scheduling site and "Event Essentials Pro", the new online invoice and payment processing site.

Mr. Rippin reviewed the revenue and expenses related to the renting of school facilities. Past revenue has been used for renovations at Oakdale School, facilities maintenance at the Riverdale School, Middle School and High School, new cleaning equipment, and improving the pool field.

Mr. Coughlin inquired as to who will be monitoring the building usage. Ms. Moroney stated the Administrative Assistant to the Business Office will continue to monitor the use of facilities. Mr. Coughlin expressed his concern about the overbooking of facilities.

Mr. Coughlin asked about the lifespan of the turf field. Mr. Rippin stated the field has a 10 to 15 year life and was about six years old. Mr. Coughlin stated that when the field was built, revenue from its use was supposed to go toward its replacement. Mr. Rippin stated he would begin to look into where the replacement funds will come from.

Ms. White asked if the new electronic calendar will help to determine when two events are taking place at the same time in multiple buildings. Ms. Moroney stated that it would.

Ms. Laprade noted that the Community Use of Schools policy had recently been updated and she would like to make sure the changes are reflected online. For example, a police detail is now required for any event exceeding 200 people.

Ms. Laprade also asked about expenses exceeding the revenue. Mr. Rippin explained that a balance had been rolled forward and there was an approved line item transfer from the operating budget to school facilities which covered the difference.

Ms. Laprade asked if there were signage on the track regarding stroller and bicycle use. Athletic Director Steve Traister answered saying that such signage is posted. There is also signage not allowing dogs on the field.

A discussion occurred between the Committee and Mr. Traister regarding the cost of replacing the turf field. Mr. Traister stated that the cost today would be between \$400,000 and \$500,000. Mr. Traister said he would look into and confirm the lifespan of the field. Mr. Rippin stated that funds would probably need to be pulled from the capital budget to cover the cost.

Dr. Pearrow asked if Dedham teams have top priority when it comes to renting the facilities. Mr. Rippin explained that the protocol is that the schools get top priority. Dedham teams are next, but need to book early in order to reserve space.

Mr. Bilafer asked if the administration were looking for a vote on the rollout of the new online system. Supt. Welch said that the process remains the same; it will just now be done electronically and he does not see the need for a vote. He just wanted the Committee to be aware of the changes.

Mr. Coughlin stated that the School Department is in the business of education and not renting facilities. He feels the facilities are overused.

Supt. Welch noted he has seen a rise in the use of facilities and feels it would be good for the Committee to review usage.

Mr. Bilafer agreed there needs to be a proper balance between facility usage and positive revenue.

DHS & DMS School Improvement Plans

Asst. Supt. Dr. Ian Kelly, DHS Principal James Forrest and DMS Principal Karen Hillman presented to the Committee. The Secondary School Improvement Plans will be available on the district website after it has been approved by the School Committee.

Dr. Kelly noted the four district goals are the same ones presented to the Committee with the Elementary School Improvement Plans on May 15.

Principal Hillman thanked her School Council and acknowledged DMS special education teacher George Kelleher-Bianchi who was helping with tonight's presentation. Mr. Kelleher-Bianchi reviewed the 2015-2017 School Improvement Plan goals and how the school had approached meeting those goals. Ms. Hillman reviewed the 2018-2020 goals set for Dedham Middle School:

Goal #1 - Writing and Critical Thinking

By June of 2020 DMS will:

- (a) establish clear expectations and benchmarks for written output in grades 6-8
- (b) engage in training for all teachers to support our work with students in achieving the established expectations and benchmarks for written output
- (c) develop a system of assessments that will allow teachers to clearly understand and monitor student progress towards established expectations and benchmarks.

Goal # 2 – School Culture

By June of 2020 DMS will:

- (a) establish clear outcomes and standards for social and emotional learning in grades 6-8
- (b) begin to ensure that curriculum is aligned with and designed to ensure mastery of established outcomes and standards
- (c) develop and deploy training and professional development structures to support SEL standards
- (d) gain a better understanding of the school's capacity as it relates to cultural awareness and responsiveness
- (e) implement an assessment system to track student progress and programmatic efficacy related to school culture

Mr. Forrest thanked the School Council and parent Lindsey Galvez, Math Department Chair Kristine Holloran, Director of Technology Don Langenhorst and Health and Wellness Director Mark Carney who were in attendance this evening.

Mr. Forrest reviewed the Grade 10 MCAS scores and the DHS school improvement goals from 2015-2017. The goals for 2018-2020 are as follows:

Goal #1

To ensure that DHS holds appropriate, equitable indicators for success for all students, that success is comparably achieved by all, and that DHS has high completion and promotion rates for all identifiable groups of learners.

Goal #2

To establish a commonly accepted definition of student-centered learning with the intent to increase the amount of student-centered practices in classrooms. Specifically, increase capacity for teaching and assessment to center around the needs and abilities of our students.

The Committee thanked the principals and Dr. Kelly for the presentation. The Committee was pleased with the collaboration and streamlining of the School Improvement Plans.

Ms. Briggs inquired about the culture at both schools. Ms. Hillman explained that she is using data from Panorama Surveys to attain feedback from staff and students and using this information to improve performance. Mr. Forrest is also using data to determine success rates of students.

Dr. Pearrow also inquired about climate and asked if Panorama Surveys could be administered at the high school level. Mr. Forrest stated he was interested in looking into staff and students opinions as well. Dr.

Kelly added that at the end of year leadership professional development, administrators will be reviewing how Panorama questions and data can be tied to the work the district is conducting.

Ms. Laprade brought up the topic of communications and noted it as a district goal. She asked how that was going to work into the schools improvement plans. She inquired into the data around PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.) at the Middle School. She also asked Dr. Kelly about the ELA curriculum and teacher training.

Ms. Hillman spoke about the difference of the PBIS system and the Bark Bucks system that was used this year. Unfortunately, the data is not consistent between the two methods. She stated that Dr. Kelly and Assistant Vice Principal Matt Reera have been spending a great deal of time analyzing student discipline records and this data is stored in PowerSchool. As for the question regarding communications, Ms. Hillman feels that is her professional responsibility to improve communications between the school and parents.

Mr. Forrest agreed saying communications is a building based goal and that communications needs to increase especially when students are falling behind.

Dr. Kelly stated that he is currently analyzing the assessment practices of ELA and agrees there needs to be a focus on the rigor of writing and expectations of students.

Mr. Donati asked about the deadline for the writing goal being 2020. Dr. Kelly explained that why this is a two year goal, that does not mean it will take two years to accomplish or that the goal cannot be amended. PK8 Humanities Curriculum Coordinator Dr. Heather Smith is currently working on the writing curriculum for entering sixth graders.

Mr. Donati asked how the administration is making the expectations clear to teachers. Supt. Welch explained this is happening through the evaluation process. Teachers are being prompted to move away from teacher centered instruction and move toward student center dialogue. Dr. Kelly is working on consistent language for all teachers.

Ms. Hillman and Mr. Forrest both agreed student voice is an important factor. At DMS, the instructional coaches help to feed the goals into the classroom.

Ms. White asked whether, now that the high school and middle school schedules are aligned, there will be an opportunity for students to utilize the resources of both schools. Mr. Forrest stated now that the schedules are aligned they can begin looking into the sharing of resources.

Supt. Welch agreed with the notion of sharing staff and allowing students the opportunity to move between schools.

Ms. White inquired if there were things that can happen right away or are currently put in place to begin achieving goals. Mr. Forrest mentioned common planning time, change in athletic academic standards, and social and emotional programs which are currently in place and can help DHS achieve their goals.

Mr. Bilafer was glad to see the collaboration between the Middle School and High School. He mentioned that the Committee will be embarking on a communications plan for the district and he will be looking to the principals for input on improving communication.

Mr. Bilafer also inquired into school culture and asked what was being done to engage staff toward a positive environment. Principal Forrest discussed having consultants come in the fall to observe and help come up with a plan to move the school in a positive direction. Principal Hillman discussed the Sources of

Strength team building between faculty and students that took place this spring as well as Safe School professional development.

Dr. Kelly stated that the strategic plan is in place to move the schools forward.

Spring Athletics Update

Athletics Director Steve Traister presented. The presentation will be available on the district website. The presentation included DHS and DMS participation numbers (68 percent of students participated in a spring sport), Tri-Valley League accomplishments, records for each spring sport, and a comparison of Bay State vs. Tri-Valley winning percentages. Mr. Traister also reviewed improvements to the Athletics Department for 2017-2018 which included entering the Tri-Valley League, budget increases (reduction of fees, purchase of uniforms, district van, strength and conditioning coach). He also discussed the improvements to Loewen Field that Supt. Welch mentioned in his update.

The Committee thanked Mr. Traister for his presentation.

Ms. Briggs asked if there were any data on the feedback from the Middle School survey. Supt. Welch explained that the information was not yet available, but he would have it before the end of the year.

Ms. Laprade inquired if the Athletics Department tracked student athlete injuries. He said that trainer Meghan McColgan compiles that information and he could report back to the Committee with that data. He stated that the State only requires the reporting of concussions. He also stated that Marathon Physical Therapy helps with muscle and joint strengthening to help prevent injuries.

Ms. White congratulated DHS Principal Jim Forrest, who will be inducted into the Norwood High School Hall of Fame.

There was a question from the audience regarding the purpose of the Middle School survey. Mr. Traister explained the survey is to help with consideration of the future of DMS sports.

Old/New Business

Discussion and Vote on Policy Manual Website Hosting by MASC (Policy Twenty-One Service)

Supt. Welch explained that - at its last meeting - the Committee discussed taking a vote on having the Policy Manual hosted by MASC at this meeting. Supt. Welch recommends moving forward with the hosting. There is \$2,500 upfront fee with an annual renewal fee of \$950 for a two-year contract. The funds will come from the FY19 Budget. No further discussion occurred.

Ms. White motioned to allow the MSAC to host the Dedham Public Schools' Policy manual; Dr. Pearrow second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Update on Town Meeting FY19 Articles by Chair Stephen Bilafer

Funding for the Master Plan in the amount of \$125,000 was approved. Mr. Rippin is moving forward with the RFP process. Proposals are due by June 15. Forerunners will be reviewed on July 11 and 12 and a finalist will be selected.

ECEC Traffic Mitigation article passed. Work will begin this summer on High and Bridge streets.

The Traffic Study as part of the Rail Trail article did not pass. Mr. Bilafer opened the floor to public comment on this matter.

Mr. Steve Davey, Avery parent, stated that the traffic study is still important to the Avery PTO and would like the Committee to make it a top priority. He presented a petition to the Committee with over 200 signatures backing the desire to move forward with a traffic study around the High School, Middle School and Avery School campus.

Mr. Bilafer expressed appreciation to the community for their support surrounding this matter. He feels the traffic study is still an important issue and would like to work with the Town to moving forward. He noted the study will not solve any of the traffic issues, it will provide data and improvement options that can be presented to the community.

Supt. Welch explained that the School Department is creating short term solutions to traffic issues around the schools and agrees that a traffic study is in order.

Mr. Coughlin suggests moving forward with an article at the next Town Meeting.

Dr. Pearrow mentioned adding this topic to next year's goals.

Mr. Bilafer stated the Committee has always supported a traffic study and takes the matter very seriously. He again stated his appreciation of the support from the community.

Subcommittee Reports & Updates

Policy

No further update.

Budget

No further update.

Equity and Inclusion Task Force

The next meeting will be Wednesday, June 13 at Dedham Middle School

Negotiations

The next Unit A negotiation will be next Wednesday, June 13. The next custodian meeting will be tomorrow Thursday, June 7.

SBRC

No further update.

Minutes

Ms. Brigs motioned to approve the minutes of May 15, 2018 as presented, Ms. White second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Donations

Ms. White motioned to accept with grateful appreciation the donation of 17 books written by, and a plaque honoring author and former Dedham graduate, Anita Shreve to the Dedham High School Library from the Class of 1964; Ms Briggs second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Mr. Rippin announced that the next donation was from Dedham Savings. Supt. Welch stated what a generous supporter Dedham Savings has been to the Dedham Public Schools and that Jerry Lavoie, former Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, will be at the next meeting to be recognized for his retirement.

Ms. Briggs motioned to accept with grateful appreciation a \$500 donation from Dedham Savings Bank to Dedham Middle School to support the Grade 7 class field trip to Boston; Ms. Laprade second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Acknowledgements and Announcements

Ms. White complimented the DPS nursing staff for its response to a medical situation at the DHS graduation ceremony.

Mr. Bilafer thanked all of those involved in preparation of the graduation ceremony including Scott Downey and the custodial staff.

Mr. Bilafer noted the need to enter Executive Session under Exemption 3, Negotiations.

Mr. Coughlin motioned to enter Executive Session under Exemption 3, Negotiations, Ms. Laprade second; a roll call vote was taken:

Mayanne Briggs- Yes

Dr. Melissa Pearrow- Yes

Lisa Laprade- Yes

Joshua Donati- Yes

Tracey White- Yes

Kevin Coughlin, Vice-Chair- Yes

Steve Bilafer, Chair- Yes

Mr. Bilafer noted that the Committee would not be returning to public session.

Regular meeting concluded at 10:10 p.m.