

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

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**MINUTES**

**June 19, 2018**

*(Approved July 24, 2018)*

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Steve Bilafer, Chair

Kevin Coughlin, Vice-Chair

Mayanne Briggs

Joshua Donati

Lisa Laprade (arrived at 6:38 P.M.)

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ABSENT:

Dr. Melissa Pearrow

Tracey White

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 6:30 p.m.

**Executive Session**

Mr. Bilafer noted the need to enter Executive Session under Exemption 1, personnel matter.

Ms. Briggs motioned to enter Executive Session under Exemption 1, personnel matter, Mr. Coughlin second; a roll call vote was taken:

Mayanne Briggs- Yes

Joshua Donati- Yes

Kevin Coughlin, Vice-Chair- Yes

Steve Bilafer, Chair- Yes

Mr. Bilafer noted the Committee would return to the regular meeting immediately following Executive Session.

Committee returned to regular session at 7:05 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. The Committee thanked Evan and Abby for their participation at the School Committee meetings this year.

## **Recognitions**

The Committee recognized students from the Avery Elementary School and the Riverdale 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 Clare Sullivan and Principal Ed Paris presented certificates to the students in attendance.

Supt. Welch recognized Jerry Lavoie, recently retired Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Dedham Savings, for his many years of support to the students in the Dedham Public Schools. Supt. Welch presented Mr. Lavoie with a plaque to thank him and Dedham Savings for the many generous donations over the years.

Superintendent Welch recognized the following retirees (in attendance) from the Dedham Public Schools during the 2017-2018 school year:

Joan M. Campagna, Oakdale Elementary School Paraprofessional  
Elizabeth (Beth) Sawyer, High School English Department Chair  
Cheryl Warshofsky, ECEC Childcare Paraprofessional

Other retirees (not in attendance) recognized were:

Marybeth Catinella, High School Secretary  
Rhonda Coates, Middle School Physical Education and Health Teacher  
James Gately, ECEC Custodian  
Karen Maregni, Avery Grade 3 teacher  
Tom Rogers, Avery Custodian  
Ron Sudmyer, High School Interim Vice-Principal

## **Superintendent's Update**

Supt. Welch acknowledged the Dedham High School Varsity Baseball team which is playing this evening in the MIAA Massachusetts Division 3 Semi-Finals against Austin Prep at Fraser Field in Lynn, MA. The team was crowned Division 3 South Sectional Champions after defeating Yarmouth last Saturday.

A small number of districts chose to dismiss students early or cancel school altogether yesterday due to some predictions of very hot and humid weather. Supt. Welch spent about three hours yesterday visiting schools to spend time in the hottest classrooms so he could better understand how students and teachers were able to handle the very warm conditions. Most schools took it easy and provided plenty of water and made ample use of cool areas.

Supt. Welch announced the appointment of Dedham High School's next Assistant Principal, Peter Cavanaugh. He was the top choice from over forty applicants. Mr. Cavanaugh will attend a future School Committee meeting for a more formal introduction.

On June 12 Supt. Welch attended the annual Junior Book Awards and Recognitions at Dedham High School. Principal Forrest and Assistant Principal Kristy Yankee teamed with faculty and department chairs to recognize the fine academic work of many underclassmen.

Also on June 12 Dedham Middle School welcomed all the 5th graders from around the district for the annual "Step Up Day". Students took buses over to the middle school to hear from and get tours by the Grade 6 teachers and students as well as to have an opportunity to eat in the cafeteria.

June 13 through July 15, Dedham Middle School's 8th grade class took its 3rd annual trip to Washington, DC. The students were accompanied by Principal Hillman and faculty members Dan King, Dan Megan, Chris Nadeau, Sean Bowles, Sarah Ascenzo, Juliette Gutierrez, Hilary Carlson, Julie Fagone, Marie Rasmussen, and Bonnie O'Neill.

The new ECEC building is going up very quickly. On Monday the contractor completed the final (third) pouring of the concrete floor slab. All floors in the entire building are now complete.

## **Reports**

### Dedham Education Foundation – Update on Grants

DEF President Mark Reilly presented. Mr. Reilly thanked the School Committee for their support. The DEF is a non-profit organization with twenty-five volunteers from the community who raise funds to support Dedham Public Schools' enrichment programs. They award around \$20,000 in grants annually. Mr. Reilly made special mention of Grant Committee members Monica DeWinter and Sandra Sicard (in attendance). He was here to update the Committee on two new grant programs. The first is the Nancy Bradley Memorial Fund. Ms. Bradley worked for the Dedham Public Schools for many years holding several positions including Foreign Language Department Chair. The grants given in her name will go toward innovative projects in world language and cultures. One of these funded projects is called "In Our Family – Portraits of All Kinds of Families". This exhibit, spearheaded by Elementary Art Teacher Bridget O'Leary and Riverdale Elementary Teacher Colleen Fitzgerald, is intended to teach students about inclusiveness. The second grant is to promote STEM opportunities. Funds for this will go toward Dedham Middle School Teachers Sean Bowles and Margaret Pohlman's Weather Watchers program as well as social emotional learning programs under the direction of Director of Counseling Services Ashley Dubé.

The Committee thanked Mr. Reilly and the DEF for its support and efforts and specifically to funding grants with programs that enhance the curriculum and align with district goals and the strategic plan.

Mr. Bilafer thanked Mike Podolski who just stepped down as Treasurer of the DEF after almost twenty years of service.

### DPS Fees Update

Superintendent Michael J. Welch presented. The presentation will be available on the Dedham Public Schools website. Supt. Welch began his presentation by thanking the Committee for reducing school fees for Dedham families. The Presentation included a history of fees charged and collected between FY13 and FY18. Supt. Welch focused his presentation on the reduction of fees this year including full day kindergarten which is now free; athletic fees which are down to \$75 per sport with a family cap of \$300; Advanced Placement exam fees which are down to \$50 for the first exam, \$25 for second, and free for three or more; and yellow school bus fees which are down to \$180 per student (equaling \$1 per day.) It is Supt. Welch's intent to keep reducing fees as much as the budget can handle.

Ms. Laprade asked if Mr. Rippin if he expected to see an increase in bus usage now that the fee is being reduced and if the reduction in fees has been advertised. Mr. Rippin stated he expected ridership to remain the same. He has added a tenth bus to the Avery route which will allow for a little extra capacity if necessary. He stated that there is a notice to the reduction of fees at the top of the bus application as well as a notification on the Unipay link.

Mr. Bilafer reassured the community that the reduction in fees did not mean a reduction in service. The fees are just being absorbed into the budget.

### District Restructure Progress Update

Asst. Superintendent Ian Kelly presented. Dr. Kelly explained that three members from the Oakdale Elementary School were present to give firsthand accounts of the end of the year restructure process as well as expectations for next school year. He introduced Principal Holli Caulfield, Instructional Coach Nina Mancinelli, and Interventionist Andrea Larson from the Oakdale Elementary School.

Principal Caulfield expressed her support of the restructure and the positive impact it has had on the curriculum. She meets weekly with the instructional coaches to discuss initiatives and student progress. Each grade level meets for common planning time and to discuss best practices. Lab classrooms have been put in place for support as well as a workshop model. For next year, Ms. Caulfield has completed Oakdale School's schedule (which includes intervention blocks) as well as the specialist schedule. She stated she still had some work to do on common planning times. She thanked First Grade Teacher Doreen Ward for coming to tonight's meeting.

Ms. Mancinelli talked about her eleven coaching cycles, facilitating Level 1 Foundations and collaborating with teachers. She thanked the Office of Curriculum for the Professional Development this year as well as Curriculum Coordinators Linda Kobierski and Heather Smith. She also thanked fellow Instructional Coach Kristen Cannon who was in attendance this evening.

Ms. Larson explained how students progressed through the LLI (Leveled Literacy Intervention) in Grades 1 through 3.

Ms. Briggs asked how the Committee could support them further. Both women felt supported by the administration.

Ms. Laprade expressed her pleasure in hearing about common planning time, interventions and the use of Panorama data.

Mr. Donati inquired into what a realistic next step might be. Ms. Caulfield would like to see writers' workshop in all the classrooms.

Mr. Donati asked what could be done better. Ms. Mancinelli said this year was filled with a lot of professional development. She is looking forward to being in the classroom more next year and having a more consistent schedule.

Ms. Caulfield commended her staff. The restructure came with a large learning curve and the teachers have been dedicated to the model.

Dr. Kelly thanked Dr. Linda Kobierski and Dr. Heather Smith for all of their dedication and hard work on the curriculum.

### Elementary Report Card Update

Asst. Superintendent Kelly presented. Dr. Kelly explained that the current report card does not align with the updates to the curriculum and needs significant changes. He has collected report cards from other districts for comparisons. Dr. Kobierski and Dr. Smith have been working on ways to align the report card to the curriculum and making the information more relevant for parents. Dr. Kelly has sent out a survey to elementary staff for feedback. He feels the process will be staggered, monitoring and adjusting one element at a time. Dr. Kelly is hoping to have an adjusted report card by December.

Ms. Laprade would like to see the report card be a more useful tool for parents to use during conferences.

Ms. Briggs suggested using the PTO as resources to help parents better understand report cards.

Supt. Welch mentioned that he will be presenting at each open house night occurring this fall.

## **Old/New Business**

### Discussion and Vote on Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Plans

No further discussion occurred.

Ms. Briggs motioned to accept the Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Plans for 2018-2020 as presented, Ms. Laprade second; the Committee voted 5-0 in favor.

### Update to Communications Planning

Mr. Rippin noted he is creating an RFP to go out to bid in order to hire a consultant to help devise a plan to restructure the Dedham Public Schools communication process.

Mr. Bilafer noted he would like to a subset of members look over the proposals.

### Discussion and Vote on the Release of Executive Session Minutes

Mr. Bilafer noted the Committee had not had a chance to review the Executive Session minutes. The Committee will reconvene in Executive Session after the regular meeting.

### Discussion on Summer Meetings Calendar

Mr. Bilafer mentioned he would like to have one meeting over the summer as well as a one night retreat. He asked the Committee to send him any dates they were not available and he will try to propose a time that work for everyone's schedule.

## **Subcommittee Reports & Updates**

### Policy

No new items to report.

### Budget

No new items to report.

### Equity and Inclusion Task Force

Mr. Donati stated the last meeting for this school year was Wednesday, June 13. The group discussed plans for next year as well as ideas about what can be done to increase participation from the community.

### Negotiations

Mr. Bilafer stated that there was a Union A negotiation meeting today and another on June 26. Meetings will then resume in the fall. He also noted a tentative agreement had been reached with the custodians' union.

### SBRC

No new items to report.

## **Minutes**

Ms. Briggs motioned to approve the minutes of June 6, 2018 as presented, Ms. Laprade second; the Committee voted 5-0 in favor.

## **Donations**

Ms. Laprade motioned to accept with grateful appreciation two donations, \$1,000 each, totaling \$2,000 from the Flag Day Committee to the Dedham Public Schools band program, for the participation of the DHS and DMS marching bands in the June 14 parade; Mr. Donati second; the Committee voted 5-0 in favor.

## **Public Comment**

Tammy Boecher, parent of a Grade 7 and Grade 10 student, was speaking this evening to support the Performing Arts programs in the Dedham Public Schools. She has heard discussions around town regarding changes to the programs. She voiced her support of Mr. Bolduc, Mr. Daniels, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Haywood and Mr. Nadeau. She encouraged the Committee to continue to support Fine Arts educators and programs. She also encouraged families to take advantage of these programs.

Karol Kolostow, Dedham resident, spoke this evening about bullying issues she has heard about at the Middle School. She asked the Committee what parents are supposed to do when they feel their child is being bullied. She stated that she helps parents advocate for themselves.

Supt. Welch stated that parents should contact the school and work their way up the chain of command - teacher, guidance counselor, and principal. If the parent still feels the matter is not being handled after communicating with the principal, he would then suggest calling the Superintendent's Office.

Ms. Kolostow asked if the Committee could comment on Amy Gilbert. Supt. Welch stated he could not.

Principal Paul Sullivan spoke to thank the Committee for all of its support over his years as principal and for everything the members had done to support a new Early Childhood Education Center facility. Tonight was Principal Sullivan's last meeting as principal of the ECEC.

### **Acknowledgements and Announcements**

Mr. Coughlin announced that the Dedham High School Baseball Team came in second place this evening.

Mr. Bilafer noted the need to enter Executive Session to review Executive Session minutes.

Mr. Coughlin motioned to enter Executive Session to review Executive Session minutes, Ms. Laprade second; a roll call vote was taken:

Mayanne Briggs- Yes

Joshua Donati- Yes

Lisa Laprade- Yes

Kevin Coughlin, Vice-Chair- Yes

Steve Bilafer, Chair- Yes

The regular meeting concluded at 9:05 p.m.