

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES
March 6, 2019
(Approved 3/20/2019)

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Steve Bilafer, Chair
Kevin Coughlin, Vice-Chair
Mayanne Briggs
Joshua Donati
Dr. Melissa Pearrow
Tracey White

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ABSENT:

Lisa Laprade

MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:

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

Meeting Location: Dedham Middle School

Meeting commenced at 7:00 p.m.

Recognitions

Director of Fine Arts Jeff Bolduc recognized Music teacher Heather Kirby for receiving the Lowell Mason Award. Mr. Bolduc also recognized many Fine Arts students for being accepted into the MMEA Eastern District Treble Chorus, MMEA Eastern Jr. District Festival, MMEA All-State Treble Chorus and Gold Key winners of the Massachusetts Scholastic Art and Writing Awards.

Student Update

Dedham High School Student Representatives, Senior Abigail Jiminian and Junior Caroline Kelleher, updated the Committee on events and happenings occurring throughout the Dedham Public Schools.

Superintendent's Update

School was closed on Monday, March 4 due to inclement weather. This was the second cancellation of the school year due to weather and the last day of school is now scheduled for Thursday, June 20, 2019.

On March 1, Supt. Welch attended an awards ceremony for Elementary Music Teacher Heather Kirby at the Massachusetts Music Educators Association (MMEA) conference. Heather received the prestigious Lowell Mason Award.

On March 5, there was another Unit A collective bargaining negotiation session. Additional sessions are scheduled for March 25, April 9, and April 30.

The Safety Super Team met on March 1. Supt. Welch informed the Committee that Kevin Coleman, Technology Advisor to the Police and Fire Departments will be leaving Dedham. Mr. Coleman has been instrumental in upgrading security cameras, facility safety, and procedures around emergency preparedness. He also just completed the transition of integrating school exterior security cameras for access in all Dedham Police squad cars.

Supt. Welch will be hosting the annual Dedham Education Foundation Spelling Bee on March 8.

Reports

Curriculum and Instruction Update

This report will be posted on the Dedham Public Schools district website.

Dedham Middle School Science teachers Shelly Pagnotta and Julia Christopher began the presentation by discussing the middle school science unit on “Waves”. Middle School S.T.E.M. Instructional Coach Kate Garand spoke about the instructional coaching model and the support she provides to the teachers. PK-8 S.T.E.M. Curriculum Coordinator Dr. Linda Kobierski discussed how the elementary curriculum ties and transitions to the middle school curriculum. She used the unit on “Waves” as an example. Dr. Kobierski then engaged the Committee in participating in a lesson plan on sound.

Dr. Pearrow asked how the PK-8 curriculum ties to the high school curriculum. Dr. Kobierski explained she is in constant contact with High School Department Chair Amy Richard Hill to make sure practices align. They work closely together to make sure students learn and develop the appropriate S.T.E.M. skills.

Ms. Briggs asked if there were any outreach to parents to help them carry out lessons at home. Dr. Kelly explained that he is working on the family curriculum website that will have a section regarding adult learning which will focus on parents being able to support their children with the curriculum.

Mr. Donati inquired into how the planning of lessons is coordinated with the curriculum redesign. Dr. Kobierski explained teachers and coaches have been using existing resources to follow the DESE 6-8 standards. They bring their ideas to Dr. Kobierski who coordinates it with the standards. The group then uses curriculum days to review the work.

Mr. Donati also asked about rigor and enhancement to student learning. Ms. Garand explained how teachers are always looking for ways to differentiate and redesign lessons to make more personalized options for students.

The Committee was happy to see writing integrated into the lessons. They also discussed the difficulty in differentiating and redesigning lessons at the middle school level

Technology Update

This report will be posted on the Dedham Public Schools district website.

Dr. Don Langenhorst introduced his technology team who were in attendance and helped with tonight's presentation:

Mike Dewar – Administrative Support and Database Specialist

Mike Yang- Network Administrator

Judy Foley- PK-12 Technology Integration Specialist

Ann-Marie Gates – Administrative Assistant

The presentation included the technology installed at the new ECEC, the 2016-2019 technology plan, support for students, assistive technology resources and universal design, emerging technology, professional development, FUSE design team and teachers, teacher and parent support, administrative support, ideas toward improvement, and guiding documents for the next technology plan coming spring 2019.

DHS Social Studies teacher Dr. Rachel Dudley, DMS English teacher Andrew Patterson and Greenlodge elementary teacher Ken Toomey described the FUSE program, which is a model for blended and personalized learning and involves cross learning with other districts.

The Committee was impressed with the technology report and thanked Dr. Langenhorst for all of his work in making Dedham a front runner in technology. The Committee discussed the FUSE program and how Dedham is ahead of districts in blended learning. Dr. Langenhorst also explained how students from the high school and middle school participate in the process. They discussed how technology can be used for differentiated learning. The use of Google suites as well as the availability of 1:1 devices allows students to be challenged at different rates without students being aware of the differences. Teachers are also able to observe other teachers to see how they are using technology and differentiated learning in their classrooms.

Winter Athletics Update

This report will be posted on the Dedham Public Schools district website.

Athletic Director Steve Traister reviewed winter participation numbers, winter record statistics, students named as Tri-Valley All Stars, and winter accomplishments.

The Boosters Club Winter Sports Banquet is on Monday, March 11 and the Trivia Night is on March 23.

The Committee discussed positive aspects of the Dedham Sports Programs such as the "Marauder of the Month" and the move to the Tri-Valley League.

Old/New Business

Discussion and Vote on 2019-2020 School Calendar

Ms. Briggs noted she did not see any changes to the existing calendar. Supt. Welch stated he would take direction from the Committee on how they would like to proceed. Mr. Donati noted he would like to see a professional development day moved into the spring to allow teachers a time for reflection. He also was not convinced that the Friday before the December break should be a full day of school. Ms. White mentioned moving the professional development day in September and/or November to the spring. Both Ms. Briggs and Ms. White would like to see the December 5th professional development day moved. Supt. Welch noted that the December professional development is used for contractually obligated elementary parent teacher conferences. It is not a set date, but one professional development day must be used for this purpose. Dr. Pearrow asked whether any crisis training will require additional professional development time next year. Supt. Welch stated he did not believe it will require additional time as it did this year.

Mr. Bilafer noted that he did not feel the Committee could take a vote on the calendar this evening.

Supt. Welch noted he would put some optional calendars together for the Committee and check to make sure that moving professional development to the spring wouldn't have any effect on MCAS testing.

Mr. Bilafer stated the vote would be postponed to the next meeting.

Superintendent's Goals Review

Superintendent Welch provided written feedback to the Committee on his 2018-2019 Goals for review for his formal evaluation.

Mr. Bilafer stated he would need a member of the Committee to collect all the evaluation input from the other members of the board.

Subcommittee Reports & Updates

Budget

Supt. Welch, Mr. Bilafer, Mr. Rippin and Mr. Donati met with representatives from the Finance Committee prior to tonight's meeting to review the proposed FY20 Operating Budget.

The School Department will be presenting to the Finance Committee on March 12. Supt. Welch provided the Committee with the FY20 Operating Budget Book that will be forwarded and reviewed by all Finance Committee members.

Equity and Inclusion Task Force

The next meeting will be Wednesday, March 13.

Negotiations

Meetings are scheduled for March 25, April 9, and April 30.

Policy

The next meeting will be Monday, March 11.

SBRC

The next meeting is March 18. The SBRC will also be scheduling community meetings to discuss the revised Master Plan.

Minutes

None

Donations

None

Public Comment

None

Acknowledgements and Announcements

The High School production of 'Guys and Dolls' will be March 15, 16 and 17.

The Dedham Education Foundations Annual Spelling Bee will be March 8.

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

Mayanne Briggs- Yes

Joshua Donati- Yes

Dr. Melissa Pearrow- Yes

Tracey White- Yes

Kevin Coughlin, Vice-Chair- Yes

Steve Bilafer, Chair- Yes

Motion passed 6-0. Mr. Bilafer stated that the Committee would not be returning to regular session.

Regular meeting ended at 9:35 p.m.