

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

October 2, 2019

(Approved October 16, 2019)

MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Kevin Coughlin, Chair
Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair
Stephen Bilafer
Mayanne MacDonald Briggs
Joshua Donati
Dr. Melissa Pearrow
Tracey White

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ABSENT:

NONE

MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:

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

Meeting Location: Avery School

Meeting Commenced: 7:00 p.m.

Recognitions

None

Student Update

The new high school student representatives to the School Committee, Senior Macayla Madan and Junior Asal Al-Azzawi introduced themselves to the Committee. They updated the Committee on events and happenings at each of the schools.

Superintendent's Update

Friday, October 11 is an early release professional development day for all Dedham Schools. Elementary schools will dismiss at 12:00 PM, Middle School will dismiss at 11:35 AM, and Dedham High School will dismiss at 11:10 AM. In addition, there will be no school on Monday, October 14 due to the Columbus Day holiday.

On Friday and Saturday, September 20 and 21 Supt. Welch joined DHS Assistant Principal Kristy Yankee, ECEC Instructional Coach Kristen Cannon, and School Committee member Mayanne Briggs for two all-day sessions of training conducted by the Leadership Matters program. These municipal training seminars are designed to improve outcomes for public sector employees and divisions and are held at the Lincoln Land Institute at Harvard University. Dedham joined teams from Mansfield, Norwood, Westerly, RI, and Pawtucket, RI, in exploring a series of workshops around team design and interaction. The group is scheduled to attend again this Friday and Saturday, and have two more two-day sessions later this year. The work will ultimately focus around a core project designed to improve outcomes.

On September 19 ECEC Principal Kim Taylor and Supt. Welch hosted nine members from Newbridge On The Charles with a tour of the new building and discussion about early childhood education. Newbridge was a strong supporter of the new facility.

On September 23 Principal Taylor and Supt. Welch hosted Westwood Superintendent Emily Parks and a project manager and School Committee member on another tour of the ECEC facility. Westwood will soon be moving into the next stage of their elementary building project and they were impressed with Dedham's new facility.

On September 23 Supt. Welch participated as a member of the Dedham Country Day Horizon's Summer Program Board of Directors to discuss their ongoing work with providing summer programming for Dedham youth. They are continuing an expansion of their program in the greater Boston community.

On September 24, a meeting was held with VHB to plan and discuss the next steps in the DHS/DMS/Avery campus circulation study. The next data gathering event will occur this Friday and Saturday October 4 and 5. This information will help to determine next steps and community meetings later this fall and winter.

The Administration has been discussing the next phase of emergency preparedness drills that will consist of full elementary school evacuations and travel to off-site locations. These are being coordinated with police, fire, EMS, and transportation officials and will be finalized during our Safety Super Team meeting on October 18. These drills will take place with students during the first two weeks of November. More information will be distributed to parents and members of the local neighborhoods before the end of October.

On September 26 Chairman Coughlin and Supt. Welch presented the Capen School lease proposal to the Board of Selectmen as an agenda item for its approval. They were unanimous in their support of this agreement, and the program as well as it evolves to the benefit of the district and the citizens of Dedham. On September 30, Supt. Welch was invited to a reception to welcome the new Town Manager Leon Goodwin who began his work in Dedham this week.

On September 30 Supt. Welch met with PTO representatives from all seven schools for the annual fall Town-wide PTO meeting. There were 18 parent representatives present who engaged in productive conversation.

All licensed educators in Dedham have been busy completing their annual self-assessments and reviewing and updating their 2-year annual goals. These were due to be uploaded into TeachPoint as of October 1. Each principal, director, and department head has conducted individual goals meetings with each educator over the past month to review the goals' alignment to school improvement plans, School Committee goals, and the district's 5-Year Strategic Plan.

Supt. Welch reminded the Committee members of the upcoming meetings at each elementary school with representatives from the architectural firm S.M.M.A. as they continue their work to update the school facilities master plan. The dates and locations for these meetings are listed below:

Greenlodge	=	Tuesday, 10/15 @7:00 PM
Riverdale	=	Tuesday, 10/22 @7:00 PM
Oakdale	=	Wednesday, 10/23 @7:00 PM

MCAS test results have been received by the Superintendent's Office and will be prepared for a mailing date of Monday, October 7.

Reports

Elementary Report Card Update

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Dr. Ian Kelly updated the Committee on changes and improvements to the elementary report card. The presentation will be available on the District Website. The report includes changes to format, content and distribution.

The Committee's questions and discussion included the need to provide training to parents, consistency to verbiage of ranking 'work habits', continuation of report card work into the secondary grade levels, benefits of having access to electronic and paper report cards, guidance for teachers on ratings, alignment of new report card to curriculum and standards, and ways to obtain feedback from families.

Equity Report Update

Superintendent Welch updated the Committee on the demographics of students across the District. The presentation will be on the District Website. The presentation includes demographic data of the student

population across the State and also across each school. There is also an update on students participating in instrumental music during the school day which was newly instituted this year.

The Committee's questions and discussion included the high percentage of students taking instrumental music, the ability of the Fine Arts department to incorporate instrumental music into the school day without students having to miss recess, the ability of the school department to purchase three dozen instruments as well as method books, and how to get the word out to families that cost is not a factor for a student who wants to play an instrument. The discussion around demographic data included how many different languages are spoken in the district (approximately 37), the difficulty of determining trends and its relation to in-district special education programs, translating documents for EL families (done in-house manually and by translation machine as well as using outside agencies), and the newly hired elementary educational interventionist to differentiate learning for above grade level students. Mr. Donati requested and update on the equity of paraprofessionals across the district.

Old/New Business

Traffic Study Update

Mr. Coughlin explained that a meeting with VHB occurred on September 24. They discussed the next steps in the process. Data collection counters will be out on October 4 and 5. This will be the third and final data collection. VHB feels they have enough data to start analyzing information. A date still needs to be set for the next public forum. DPW Director Joe Flanagan was also at that meeting to discuss the grant recently received by the Town to improve bike routes.

Vote on Executive Session Minutes

Mr. Coughlin explained the following Executive Session minutes were voted in executive session on September 18. The attorney has advised not to release the minutes due to the impact of ongoing negotiations and litigation.

Ms. White motioned, on the advice of counsel due to the impact on ongoing contract bargaining negotiations and litigation, to withhold the Executive Session minutes in full from:

February 27, 2019

March 6, 2019

May 1, 2019

May 15, 2019

Ms. Briggs second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Ms. Briggs motioned, on the advice of counsel due to the impact on ongoing contract bargaining negotiations and litigation, to withhold the Executive Session minutes in full from March 20, 2019; Ms White second, the Committee voted 6-0. Dr. Pearrow abstained as she was not in attendance at the Executive Session on March 20.

Subcommittee Reports and Updates

Budget

Mr. Donati stated that the subcommittee met this evening to begin discussing the FY21 Capital and Operating Budget. The next subcommittee meeting will be on November 6. Mr. Donati will remain Chair of the Budget Subcommittee.

Coalition for Drug & Alcohol Awareness

Dr. Pearrow stated there was a general meeting on September 10 as well as meeting for all stakeholders around strategic planning. The MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey results will be presented at the October 16 School Committee meeting. Another Parent Survey will also be going out to the community.

Equity & Inclusion Task Force

No report

Policy

The Subcommittee is working on a date for their next meeting.

SBRC

Next meeting will not be until early November. Mr. Bilafer wants to make sure that the Chair of the SBRC is included in the upcoming master plan meetings.

Traffic Circulation Study

Nothing further to report.

Negotiations

Mr. Coughlin explained that the October 3 Fact Finding meeting has been postponed to November 19. There have been over 20 negotiation sessions, seven with a state mediator who requested the move to Fact Finding. Kevin thanked the Negotiation Subcommittee for all of the hard work. Mr. Coughlin stated that he does not want to see this situation affect the students.

Minutes

Ms. Briggs motioned to approve the minutes from September 18, 2019, Ms. White second; the Committee voted 6-0 in favor. Ms. Laprade abstained as she was not in attendance at the September 18, 2019 meeting.

Donations

Dr. Pearrow motioned to approve a donation in the amount of \$50 to the Avery School on behalf of Virginia Melendez and Wells Fargo Bank, Ms. White second; the Committee voted 7-0 in favor.

Public Comment

Paquit Bass, middle school and Oakdale parent and Town Meeting member, stated that she voted in favor of the traffic study. She wanted to know if VHB had done a zip code study for bikers and walkers. Mr. Coughlin explained Public Comment is not a “question and answer” session, however he allowed Mr. Rippin to answer the question. Mr. Rippin stated he has provided VHB with address of students who have applied for bus passes. Ms. Bass also wanted to know when the study will conclude. Mr. Rippin stated at the end of the calendar year. Ms. Bass stated she would like to see a priority placed on students walking to school.

Steven Davey, Avery Parent, wanted to credit Music teacher Sara Santos for her work at the Avery School. Mr. Davey also apologized to the Committee for his comments at the last meeting where he thought someone on the Committee stated that a letter from the Department of Transportation was unenforceable. Mr. Davey asked if everyone on the Board had seen the agreement and if they agreed it was a binding document. Mr. Coughlin said he would take Mr. Davey’s comments under advisement. Mr. Davey asked who was on the Traffic Study subcommittee. Mr. Coughlin, Ms. Laprade and Ms. Briggs are on the subcommittee.

Acknowledgements and Announcements

Ms. White announced the Dedham Education Foundation Dash is this weekend at Memorial Field at 11:30am.

Mr. Coughlin thanked all the Committee members who attended Dedham Day.

Mr. Coughlin announced the need to enter Executive Session under Exception 3, contract negotiations.

Ms. Briggs motioned to enter Executive Session under Exemption 3, contract negotiations; Ms. White second; a roll call vote was taken:

Stephen Bilafer - Yes

Mayanne MacDonald Briggs - Yes

Joshua Donati - Yes

Dr. Melissa Pearrow - Yes

Tracey White - Yes

Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair - Yes

Kevin Coughlin, Chair - Yes

Mr. Coughlin announced the committee would not be returning to open session.

The open meeting ended at 8:40 p.m.