

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING  
REMOTE MEETING

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**MINUTES**

**June 17, 2020**

*(Approved 6/24/2020)*

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENT via REMOTE PARTICIPATION:

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

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ABSENT:

None

MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION REMOTELY PRESENT:

Michael Welch, Superintendent  
Dr. Ian Kelly, Assistant Superintendent  
Sam Rippin, Assistant Superintendent for Business & Finance

Meeting Location:

Per Governor Baker's order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. C. 30A sec. 20, the meeting was held via online Google Hangout Conference as posted on the agenda: [meet.google.com/yim-hnzo-sze](https://meet.google.com/yim-hnzo-sze) or by phone 1-406-905-1917 with PIN: 623 570 779#

Remote meeting commenced at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Coughlin called the School Committee meeting to order. A roll call attendance was taken:

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

Mr. Coughlin read the following statement regarding the remote meeting:

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order concerning imposition on strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, meetings in the Town of Dedham are being conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. We have arranged for a call-in number for those who would like to listen to this meeting. While it is possible that some members of the public may be invited to comment, it is also possible that despite our best efforts, we are not able to provide for real-time involvement, we will post a recording of this meeting as soon as we are able.

## **Recognitions**

### Student Recognition for Community Service – Grace Donahue

The Committee recognized Riverdale third grader Grace Donahue for making and donating child-size masks for the community in response to the Covid-19 recommendations and mandates. The masks were distributed to children through the Riverdale Food Service distribution site.

### New England Math League High Achievers

PreK-8 STEM Curriculum Coordinator Dr. Linda Kobierski and Math Consultant Nancy Clement announced the High Achievers of the New England Math League exams for grades 4 through 8. Due to technical difficulties the presentation of names was unable to be shown on the screen. The presentation will be available on the district website.

### 2019-2020 Retirement Recognitions

Chair Coughlin recognized the following retirees for their years of service to the students and families of the Dedham Public Schools. A tribute video was created in honor of the retirees but was unable to be shown due to technical difficulties. The video will be available on the district website.

Dr. Marjorie Goldstein Fradin, Elementary Educational Team Leader, 7 years  
Ann Grant, Middle School Technology Teacher, 15 years  
Carolyn Pettey, High School Science Teacher, 16 years  
Jeffrey Taylor, Middle School Music Teacher, 16 years  
Fred Springer, High School Science Teacher, 18 years  
Mary Torchio, Greenlodge Educational Interventionist, 20 years  
Michelle Waugh, Avery and Riverdale Speech Language Pathologist, 21 years  
Michael Dewar, Technology Data Specialist, 21 years  
Patricia Bearfield, Greenlodge Special Education Teacher, 25 years  
Dr. Paul Sullivan, Early Childhood/DELTA Principal, 28 years  
David Haluska, High School Occupational Education Teacher, 28 years  
Mary Noonan, Avery Speech Language Pathologist, 28 years  
Donald Lazdowsky, Middle School Senior Custodian, 34 years

## Superintendent's Update

This week is the final week of remote learning for Dedham Public School students. June 19 is the last official day of the school year, and there will be a number of ceremonies and events to mark milestones for students and families. Supt. Welch congratulated all students completing their final year of schooling in their respective schools, and also to the members of our faculty and staff who will be finishing their many years of dedicated service to the district.

The district is waiting for draft guidelines from the DESE regarding the reopening of schools in the fall. These guidelines are expected to be released by Friday.

The district will be sending out a parent/staff/student survey about remote learning experiences and preferences for the fall reopening in the next week. Supt. Welch will also begin the process of recruiting interested stakeholders for a "Fall Reopening" Committee. Feedback from the survey will be used to develop a community feedback mechanism to inform the Committee's work around developing plans for reopening in the fall.

Supt. Welch congratulated the Dedham High School Class of 2020 Graduates. He thanked Principal Forrest and all the educators involved in pulling off the very unique ceremony on Saturday, June 6. Video footage of the entire graduation, speeches, and Senior Night award winners is available on Dedham TV and the district website. He also thanked the many members of the community who came out to support the seniors during the rolling rally.

Supt. Welch received a usage review of the INTERFACE mental health counseling referral service. There continues to be growth in the need for these services, and residents of Dedham are making good use of this valuable resource. The Dedham Public Schools and the Dedham Police split the \$16,000 annual cost of this service.

Supt. Welch convened his 5th bi-monthly Town Wide PTO Officers on Monday night. Seventeen parents were on the call representing each of the schools in the district. In addition, there were several members of the District Leadership team to help answer parent questions.

Supt. Welch continues to participate on periodic "Task Force" calls with Dedham town leaders to keep informed on what is happening in other Town departments.

## Reports

### Revised FY21 Budget

Supt. Welch explained that he was scheduled to present the School budget to the Finance Committee on March 17. However, due to the pandemic, the hearing was postponed and a new date has not yet been set. The original proposed budget voted by the School Committee on January 29, 2020 was for \$43,076,992. As the Town has been revising its own budget, the Town Manager asked for the schools to cut their proposal by \$500,000. Supt. Welch and Asst. Supt. Dr. Ian Kelly made significant cuts to the curriculum budget. Two high school teachers will be cut due to declining enrollment as well as one district paraprofessional. Other reductions were made to field trip costs and principal and department head budgets.

Mr. Donati stated the Budget Subcommittee voted unanimously to approve a new budget proposal of \$42,576,992. No further discussion occurred.

Ms. White motioned to approve the reduction of the budget by \$500,000 from \$43,076,992 to \$42,576,992, Dr. Pearrow second; a roll call vote was taken:

Steve Bilafer- Yes

Mayanne Briggs - Yes

Joshua Donati - Yes

Dr. Melissa Pearrow - Yes

Tracey White - Yes

Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair - Yes

Kevin Coughlin, Chair - Yes

**Motion passed 7-0**

Ms. White thanked the Committee for not laying off any employees due to the pandemic.

## **Old/New Business**

### Discussion and Vote on The Education Cooperative (TEC) Board Member

Dedham Public Schools is a member of the The Education Cooperative (TEC). The School Committee must approve one of its members or an Administrator to be a voting board member of TEC. Asst. Supt. Dr. Ian Kelly has volunteered to continue on as the representative. No further discussion occurred.

Ms. White motioned to approve the appointment of Dr. Ian Kelly as the representative from Dedham to The Education Cooperative Board of Directors for the 2020-2021 school year, Mr. Donati second; a roll call vote was taken:

Steve Bilafer- Yes

Mayanne Briggs - Yes

Joshua Donati - Yes

Dr. Melissa Pearrow - Yes

Tracey White - Yes

Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair - Yes

Kevin Coughlin, Chair - Yes

**Motion passed 7-0**

### Superintendent's Evaluation

Ms. Briggs presented to Supt. Welch his yearly evaluation from the Committee. (The full review can be found the end of the minutes.) The Committee thanked the Superintendent for all of his incredibly hard work this year.

## **Minutes**

Ms. White motioned to approve the minutes from the remote meeting on June 3, 2020, Dr. Pearrow second; a roll call vote was taken:

Steve Bilafer- Yes

Mayanne Briggs - Yes

Joshua Donati - Yes

Dr. Melissa Pearrow - Yes

Tracey White - Yes

Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair - Yes

Kevin Coughlin, Chair - Yes

**Motion passed 7-0**

## **Public Comment**

Mr. Coughlin read the following statement:

The “public comment” portion of the meeting is an opportunity for members of the public to make brief comments upon matters that are before the School Committee. It is not intended as a question and answer session, is not intended as a vehicle for members of the public to disrupt the meeting, and it is not intended as a forum for raising topics that are not appropriate for public discussion.

Susan Butler, former School Committee Chair, read a statement to the Committee regarding the abandoned rail bed and asked the Committee to work with the Town to have both legal teams review the rights of the property.

## **Acknowledgements and Announcements**

Ms. White acknowledged the Middle School’s social studies department for their work during remote learning. Teacher’s Kim Randall and Christian Leger spoke about the projects students have worked on while at home. Due to technical difficulties a presentation of these projects was unable to be shown on the screen. The presentation will be available on the Middle School website.

Mr. Donati recognized all the unique and creative ways teacher found to interact with students during the school closure.

Ms. White and Dr. Pearrow thanked Kevin Coughlin for his work as chair this past year.

Dr. Pearrow motioned to adjourn the remote meeting of June 20, 2020, Mr. Donati second; a roll call vote was taken:

Steve Bilafer- Yes  
 Mayanne Briggs - Yes  
 Joshua Donati - Yes  
 Dr. Melissa Pearrow - Yes  
 Tracey White - Yes  
 Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair - Yes  
 Kevin Coughlin, Chair - Yes  
**Motion passed 7-0**

Remote meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m

**End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report: Superintendent** 

**Superintendent:** Michael Welch  
**Evaluator:** Dedham School Committee 6/15/2020  
**Name Signature Date**

**Step 1: Assess Progress Toward Goals (circle one for each set of goals)**

Professional Practice Goal(s)	Did Not Meet	Some Progress	Significant Progress	Met	Exceeded
Student Learning Goal(s)	Did Not Meet	Some Progress	Significant Progress	Met	Exceeded
District Improvement Goal(s)	Did Not Meet	Some Progress	Significant Progress	Met	Exceeded

**Step 2: Assess Performance on Standards (check one box for each standard)**

Indicators	Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement	Proficient	Exemplary
<i>Unsatisfactory</i> = Performance on a standard or overall has not significantly improved following a rating of <i>Needs Improvement</i> , or performance is consistently below the requirements of a standard or overall and is considered inadequate, or both. <i>Needs Improvement/Developing</i> = Performance on a standard or overall is below the requirements of a standard or overall but is not considered to be Unsatisfactory at the time. Improvement is necessary and expected. For new superintendents, performance is on track to achieve proficiency within three years. <i>Proficient</i> = Proficient practice is understood to be fully satisfactory. This is the rigorous expected level of performance. <i>Exemplary</i> = A rating of <i>Exemplary</i> indicates that practice significantly exceeds <i>Proficient</i> and could serve as a model of practice regionally or statewide.				
Standard I: Instructional Leadership	*	*	+ X	*
Standard II: Management and Operations	*	*	+ X	*
Standard III: Family and Community Engagement	*	*	+ X	*
Standard IV: Professional Culture	*	*	+ X	*

**End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report: Superintendent** 

**Step 3: Rate Overall Summative Performance (Based on Step 1 and Step 2 ratings; circle one.)**

Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement	Proficient	Exemplary
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<b>Step 4: Rate Impact on Student Learning (Check only one.)</b>	Low	Moderate	High
	*	*	X *

### Step 5: Add Evaluator Comments

Comments and analysis are recommended for any rating but are required for an overall summative rating of *Exemplary*, *Needs Improvement* or *Unsatisfactory* or Impact on Student Learning rating of *high* or *low*.

#### Commendations:

The only factors from preventing the Superintendent from achieving exemplary status this year are the external factors that have caused setbacks to our mutual goals as a district. This was a challenging year professionally, personally and globally. The superintendent, with his quite resolve and strength, led the district through very uncertain times. His communication throughout the COVID-19 pandemic was on-point, reassuring and even comforting.

The school committee feels that the Superintendent maintained a professional demeanor throughout contract negotiations and most importantly, was able to pivot, as soon as they were complete to focus on the tasks at hand; teaching and student learning. The Superintendent has strong written, interpersonal and verbal communication skills that he demonstrated throughout the year. He is not only able to accept feedback but solicits it regularly. The Superintendent approaches all tasks

with forethought and responsibility. When the Superintendent was challenged with a personal situation and needed to make his family priority, he was still able to manage his work load without impacting the school system.

The Superintendent is a teacher at heart. He loves teaching and learning above all. He is willing to share his successes as well as our learning opportunities. He is very highly regarded throughout the state and is often requested to speak to Superintendent and School committee groups, as an expert in his field. Together we completed a Facilities Master Plan Update as well as a very comprehensive traffic study. These processes were long and included dozens and dozens of meetings. The superintendent was incredibly helpful gaining the largest community input for these projects we have ever seen.

Throughout the school closures, the Superintendent was able to ensure that the Food Services Director and her staff had the support they needed in order to provide meals for every child in Dedham under the age of 18. These meals were available in three locations and thousands of meals have been served.

Recommendations: The School Committee had the following recommendations for the Superintendent and for ourselves.

- If on-line learning needs to continue this fall, we would like to see consistency and continuity of remote learning across the district, school to school, classroom to classroom.
- We would like to increase our efforts to continue to hire and retain highly qualified teachers, while increasing the diversity amongst the teaching and administrative teams.
- We would like to ensure that we increase the use of data to improve teacher effectiveness and student learning.
- That we have the ability to adjust our collective goals to align with unforeseen circumstances such as COVID-19.
- That although the Superintendent values feedback, we would like to see him not judge himself so harshly.
- We would like to have comprehensive communication and engagement of families when MCAS results are shared. We would like the information to include the great, the good and the missed opportunities, with plans to target these opportunities when MCAS resumes.
- The School Committee would like to have retreats throughout the year. This would provide an opportunity to check in on status of goals, reallocation of resources, and for us to help with the communication of successes and challenges.