

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

MEETING MINUTES January 29, 2014

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Joe Heisler	Jen Barsamian, Vice Chair	Tom Ryan
Kevin Coughlin	Mayanne Briggs	Susan Butler-Walko
Rachel McGregor		

MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:

Cynthia Kelly, Assistant Superintendent
Michael LaFrancesca
Kathy Gaudreau

Chair called the Meeting to order at 6:41p.m.

Chairman Heisler gave an update on the MSBA meeting today. The Board voted unanimously to approve Dedham's proposal to move forward to the feasibility schematic design to build a new preschool and Kindergarten center in Dedham. He state that the Superintendent was not able to be there, and will not be present at tonight's meeting while she recuperates. Mr. Coughlin stated he, Mr. Keegan, Representative McMurtry, and Mr. Butler, also attended the MSBA meeting.

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Dr. Kelly updated the members with the following:

Middle School

National Geography Bee

Congratulations to grade 7 student Brian Foulds who earned 1st place in the National Geography Bee contest held at Dedham Middle School in December. Brian will now move on to the state level of competition in the coming weeks. We would also like to recognize the following students for their participation in the final competition:

Edwin Abreu – grade 6
Tim Vaughn – grade 6
Matthew Sampson – grade 6
Nicholas Wilcox – grade 6
Peter Chirokas – grade 7
Gina Pasciuto – grade 7
Greg Walter – grade 7
Tim Coakley – grade 8
Lillian Tobias – grade 8

DMS Music Field Trip – CANCELLED

We are sorry to report that due to lack of student participation that the field trip to New York City, as previously approved by the school committee, has been cancelled. Initially we received overwhelming support and interest in the trip. When it came to deadlines and submission of payment, we did not have enough students signed up. 28 students have signed up and have submitted payment for the trip to Spain scheduled for February 2015. This trip was previously approved by school committee.

Avery School

The Avery Winter Enrichment program is now underway! 94 students are involved various workshops such as Chess, Cupcake Decorating, Soccer, Animation, Paper Airplanes and the popular Avery Buzz! Be on the lookout for the next student published newspaper. Tomorrow, Avery will host the Understanding Wildlife nonprofit organization as the Avery Gymnasium turns into a tropical rain forest. Students will be able to enjoy an up close experience with various rain forest creatures such as macaws, snakes, monkeys. There will be two shows in the evening, 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. Admission is \$5.00.

Oakdale

In honor of Martin Luther King Jr's birthday. students and staff participated in a Hero Day on Friday, January 17th. Students participated in various activities about what a hero is. Students were encouraged to dress up as their hero. There was a whole school assembly where many students read about their heroes. Other classes read poems and sang songs. Dan Hallassey graciously videoed the assembly which can be viewed on Dedham cable. 4th and 5th grade students have begun the MCAS prep program. This is geared to assist those students who may struggle on the MCAS additional support. The groups meet 2 hours per week and focus on test taking strategies and answering open response questions. The winter after school enrichment session at Oakdale will begin Monday. 12 courses are running and over 120 students are participating.

Riverdale

On Tuesday, January 21 Riverdale's 2-4 grade students were treated to a visit from children's author and science educator Nate Ball. This presentation was provided courtesy of our librarian, Mrs. Mayyasi, and our friends at the Blue Bunny Bookstore. Nate Ball is the author of Alien in my Pocket. We are pleased to report that members of the fifth grade class began working with first and second grade students as the first ever "Riverdale Play Leaders." After approaching Dr. Lucas about the idea, the program was launched with students volunteering their recess time to assist younger students. At this time six play leaders: Emma Egan, Sarah Henao, Molly McHugh, Lauren Murphy, Jenna Murphy, and Lily Roche Van Oot put on their special vests and badges at recess to help Riverdale's youngest students learn new games and have fun during outdoor or indoor recess. Reaction from the students and the staff members has been extremely positive.

ECEC

The ECEC will hold the Full Day Kindergarten Lottery at 9:30 tomorrow morning in the ECEC gymnasium. There are no preschool classes on Thursday and Friday due to parent teacher conferences. The PTO Sponsored Rainforest Show at the ECEC will be held on Friday evening at 5 and 7 pm.

Greenlodge

On December 20th Greenlodge held their Holiday assembly. Students engaged in sing alongs, teachers had an ugly Christmas sweater competition judged by the students. Mr. Banios along with Dan Hallisey from Dedham Educational television created a video Greenlodge Super Heroes highlighting our students as super learners and our super dedicated teaching staff. The assembly closed with an entire staff performance of Jingle Bell Rock. Due to the length of the holiday break, Greenlodge teachers assigned varied reading activities and encouraged on line math practice. The response was excellent with over a third of the students working regularly on line on their math and almost all students completing their reading assignments. Thank you to our Greenlodge parents who supported their students and recognized the importance of staying in learning mode throughout the two weeks. Greenlodge teachers in grades three through five have all established extra help and MCAS preparation times after school in order to assist students and boost academic achievement.

Dedham High School

The mid-year exams finished up on Monday, January 27, 2014 and Semester Two started on Tuesday, January 28, 2014. The Annual National Honor Induction took place on Monday, January 27, 2014 in the Dedham High School Auditorium. Current and newly inducted students were recognized for Scholarship, Service, Leadership, and Character. This year's guest speaker was Andrea Hage, Dedham High Class of 2009 and graduate of Boston University. The DHS Talent Show will take place at 6:00 p.m. in the high school auditorium. The event starts at 6:00 p.m. and tickets are \$5.00. The Drama Guild will be competing in this year's Drama Festival. The club will be performing in the first round of the festival on March 1, 2014 at 12:15 p.m. at Norwell High School. More information will be provided as the date for the competition gets closer.

REPORTS

Secretaries and Clerks have negotiated their agreement with a new evaluation tool that was agreed upon and salary increases of 1.5% for FY13, 2.0% for FY14, and 2% for FY15. Mr. Ryan motioned to approve the Secretaries and Clerks contract, seconded by Mrs. Briggs. Roll call vote taken: Mr. Ryan – YES, Mrs. Walko – YES, Mr. Coughlin – YES, Mrs. Briggs – YES, Mrs. McGregor-YES, Mrs. Barsamian – YES, Mr. Heisler – YES. Mr. Heisler signed the contract.

DONATIONS

A grant was awarded to the Dedham Middle School from Arbella Insurance Foundation to Mr. Jeff Daniels, Band teacher at the Middle School in the amount of \$300.00 to transport students to the Boston Symphony Orchestra in February. Mrs. Barsamian motioned to accept the grant, seconded by Mrs. McGregor, voted unanimous.

A mini grant was awarded to Dedham High School from Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation in the amount of \$500.00 to be used for physical education and/or athletics, as part of their "Community Spirit Awards". – *Jennifer Finn, project manager/business analyst is a 1995 DHS graduate and wrote: "I'm currently employed by Harvard Pilgrim Health Care. Each year an employee is granted a \$500 mini grand donation to an organization of their choice. This year I felt compelled to give back to my alma mater. She wrote about the positive impact that Marge Bohan had on her as her volleyball coach.* Mrs. Walko motioned to accept this grant with grateful appreciation, Mr. Ryan seconded, voted unanimous.

PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Coughlin motioned to open the public hearing for the FY15 Budget, seconded by Mrs. Barsamian, Roll call vote taken: Mr. Ryan – YES, Mrs. Walko – YES, Mr. Coughlin – YES, Mrs. Briggs – YES, Mrs. McGregor-YES, Mrs. Barsamian – YES, Mr. Heisler – YES.

Mr. Coughlin stated that the Budget Sub Committee met this evening to go forward with the proposed FY15 budget of \$36.9 million. Mr. LaFrancesca presented the FY15 Powerpoint presentation. The Budget presentation will be up on the website tomorrow morning and stated that there will not be a vote taken this evening, voting will take place at the February 5th meeting. Questions and Discussions followed. Mrs. Gaudreau, Director of Special Education provided information to the board regarding the process of reducing the paraprofessional staff. Mr. Poole, District 2 Town Meeting member asked if the Capital Budget was included, Mr. LaFrancesca said that it was not, this was the Operating Budget. Mr. Ryan requested that a district profile be included with some basic facts including size of the district, number of students, FTE's, general and special education budget information, highlighting efficiencies.

Mrs. Briggs motioned to close the public hearing on the proposed FY15 Budget, seconded by Mrs. Walko. Roll call vote taken: Mr. Ryan – YES, Mrs. Walko – YES, Mr. Coughlin – YES, Mrs. Briggs – YES, Mrs. McGregor-YES, Mrs. Barsamian – YES, Mr. Heisler – YES.

REPORTS

Superintendents Search Update: Mrs. Briggs updated the committee saying tonight they would finalize the search committee, review the report, and share the candidate profile. The school committee has the information from the on-line survey questionnaire that Dr. Bettencourt received. Mrs. Briggs stated that some of the categories (Teachers, ECEC Parent, and Member At Large category) there were too many applications received. With 20 nominees and 13 spots to fill, Mrs. Briggs put those names in a bag, names were pulled. This process comes with the recommendation with Dr. Bettencourt.

The following names were pulled from the bags:

Tim Carey - At Large Member
Julie Jennetti -ECEC parent
Liz Hegarty and Rachel Dudley – Teachers

Superintendent Search Screening Committee

Mayanne Briggs and Tom Ryan - School Committee Members
Kathy Gaudreau and John Murray - Administrators
Holli Armstrong - Principal
Liz Hegarty and Rachel Dudley - Middle/High School Teachers
Tim Geary – Support staff
Jim MacDonald - Town representative
Walter Hughes-Town Retiree
Julie Jeannetti - ECEC/Elementary Parent
Kimberly Roslonek - Middle School Parent
Paul McMurty - State Representative
Lynne Canavan - High School Parent
Tim Carey - At Large Member

Mr. Coughlin motioned to approve the above names for the screening committee, seconded by Mrs. Barsamian, voted unanimous.

Dr. Bettencourt from NESDEC updated the members. There were just under 200 people who attended the focus group meetings. Approximately 60% of the questionnaire results came from parents. The OTHER group identified themselves as taxpayers, grandparents, clergy, therapist, support etc. The Successful candidate profile will be the guide for the screening committee. That document will ultimately be made to the public. Dr. Bettencourt stated that we are on schedule and he is receiving applications in the office. Deadline is February 4, 2014

The school committee made suggestions and discussed ideas as they went thru the Successful Candidate Profile document provided by Dr. Bettencourt. Dr. Bettencourt commented on consistent areas that came thru that document. Discussions and suggestions took place.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Coughlin requested to have information on the High School cafeteria in the future. Mr. Heisler stated that the 1:1 Initiative agenda item be put on the upcoming agenda along with PARCC updates. Mrs. Walko requested to have a review of National Honor Society at the high school, procedures, comparisons with other communities, data – how many have applied, ratio between girls and boys, going back 3-5 years. The Policy Sub Committee will need to reconvene. Recognition of Oakdale and Greenlodge Student council members on the February 5th agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Monica Wilconson, Trustee of Dedham Public Library, provided information on study sessions at the Library on December 18th and January 23. Papa Ginos donated pizza with more than 20 students from Mrs. Spies class and Ms. McKenzie's ELL classes who came out to study. AP and final exams sessions were held. Ms. Wilconson stated it was a great success overall.

The Dedham Education Foundation will hold the annual reception on February 13th at 4:30 p.m. to honor the grant recipients at the Legion.

Mrs. McGregor motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Barsamian, voted unanimous.
Meeting ended at 8:36 p.m.