

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING—December 2, 2009
Town Hall, Lower Conference Room

PRESENT

Dave Roberts, Chair
Margaret Connolly, Vice Chair
Thomas Ryan
Tracy Driscoll
John Healy
Kevin Coughlin
Joe Heisler

ADMINISTRATION

June M. Doe, Superintendent
Cynthia Kelly, Asst. Superintendent

Convened: 7:00 PM

Adjourned: 8:43 PM

Members of the DEA attended the meeting. Mr. Tim Dwyer, HS Social Studies teacher and DEA President read a prepared statement to the Committee. “The professional educators of the Dedham Public Schools have an urgent message – settle this contract fairly.” Members of the group presented gift packages from each of the schools symbolizing donated time and money teachers have spent each year over and above what they are contractually paid for. Chairman Dave Roberts read a prepared statement in response which gave a brief overview of the negotiation process to date and it is the fervent hope of the Committee to collectively strive to come to a labor agreement that does not negatively impact the future of education in Dedham.

The Committee recognized members of the DHS girls’ soccer team and Head Coach Don Savi. He introduced the seniors and captains: Cara Cocoran, Patrice Vettori, Julia Kilcoyne and Lydia Caissy. Mr. Savi thanked the assistant coaches, Coach Wallin and Coach Eisenhut who are great role models for the girls. The girls’ soccer team finished third in the Herget Division and also qualified for State Tournament play.

The Committee recognized members of the DHS football team and Head Coach Keith Comeau. Coach Comeau introduced Captain, Bernie Girard; seniors Nick Walch, Dave Sheehan, Kevin O’Brien, Nick Boudreau, Dante DeBenedictis, James Gilligan. Coach Comeau felt the great support on Thanksgiving Day contributed to the win over Norwood.

Mr. Arria spoke about Coach Comeau’s efforts this year and he works tirelessly. He feels this is a turning point for the football program. Coach Savi does a tremendous job with the soccer program. They won 7 out of the last 8 Herget Division Championships. He mentioned some of the other successes this fall. The Field Hockey team made it to the state tournament. Golf competed in the State Tournament; from there one individual went onto the individual States. The Boys Soccer team made it to the state tournament into the second round. Swim and Dive team finished 7th in Division I out of 22 teams. We had many boys and girls named to Bay State All Conference Team.

The Committee recognized Mr. Mark Whalen, Executive Vice President of Needham Bank. Mr. Arria introduced him. They have been great sponsors for Dedham Public Schools. They are donating 2 new score boards for the gymnasium. Mr. Whalen introduced his colleague Mr. William Day.

The Flu Clinic: Gail Kelly. Recognize the school nurses for participating in partnership with the Town’s Health Department in the flu clinics. Update: A clinic was held at the Middle School for children 9 and under. 350 students received vaccinations. The nurses also identified high risk students and they were offered vaccinations as well. Next week we have plans to run school based flu clinics for age 10 and up. Ms. Kelly recognized the work the nurses have done in servicing students this year with the volume of flu like symptoms, parent concerns, phone calls. The volume in the health offices we’ve never seen before. Maria Antonuccio, Sue Healy, Judy Byrne, Geri Kelley, Mary MacDougall, Jane Moy, Sheila Bennett.

The Committee welcomed the Greenlodge Student Council and Principal Kiewlicz. The advisors are: Mrs. Shevory, Miss Killgoar, and Mrs. Mucci. The student council members for Grade 4 are: Olivia Stipo, Timothy Coakley, Katie Bondar, Lindsey Swyers, Davin Sweeney, Emma Francis, Christopher Stronach, Declan Francis, and Ryan Flynn. Student council members for Grade 5 are: Olivia Corrado, Lindsey Patterson, Brian Pazienza, Miguel Arroyo, Emmanuelle Fried, Kyle Grealish, Siobhan Dalton, Grey Gittleman, and Timothy Lawlor. 17 members out of 18 were present. They are representatives to the classrooms. They oversee recycling in the classrooms. They announce performers at the sharing assemblies and help out with the lunch time learners. Programs run by the student council include: the food drive, coats for kids, letters to veterans project – 200 letters to send to soldiers in Afghanistan. An autographed picture of the Greenlodge Student Council was presented to each School Committee member.

The Committee recognized the winners of the VFW Writing Contest, "Patriots Pen". This year's essay prompt was "*When is the right time to honor our military heroes?*" There were over two hundred entries of this five-paragraph essay. Three Grade 6 students from the Middle School received awards. Ms. Harrington and Mr. Warren are the two 6th grade social studies teachers.

The 3rd place winner was Christopher Olliney, a member of the Tiger team and his favorite subject is Math.

The 2nd place winner was Amelia Amato, a member of the Olympian team and her favorite subject is Spanish.

The 1st place winner was Andrew Wilson, a member of the Olympian team and his favorite subject is Science. He was the district champion and his essay will proceed to the state championship level.

The Committee welcomed the Middle School Student Council and Principal Gately and Assistant Principal Boles. There are a total of 60 members of the Middle School Council.

Student Council members for Grade 6 are: Joe Borsellio, Angela Goffredo, Elizabeth Balzarini, Guy Grant, Alice Jonson, Kim Masters, Christina Maloof, Kristina Mitchell, Alyssa Pinkham, Darcy Rump, Colleen Tuite, Hannah Ryan, Stephen Acosta, James Casali, Tori DeBerardinis, Jena Rose DelRosano, Allison Crowley, Kristen Fitzgerald, Emily Martin, Caroline Mitchell, Tony Pandolfi, Jason Sulinski, Noah Thakur.

Grade 7 members are: Alivin Di, Maddie Curran, Victoria Camillo, Robin Karam, Unity Jean-Louis, Malcolm Grandy, Delaney Kabat, Edda Perry, Ronny Pucci, Bailey Mudge, Megan Podolski, Ben Springer, Joselina Vasquez, Allison Chaffee, JoAnn Devine, Brittany Greenwood, Geneva Driscoll, Sam Girard, Melissa Ingemi, Andrew Maher, Mike Morganeli, Gave Straight-Rattet, Jeff Schuster, Paul Riley.

Grade 8 members are: Rachel Barkowitz, Marianna Hage, Megan Rutherford, Maddie Brown, Kristen Aldous-Traynor, Nick Garcia, Michael Munchbach, Owen Tuite, Danny Sullivan, David Sullivan, Benji Suprice.

Advisors: Ms. Lyons, Ms. Huff, Ms. Unger. The council organized a very successful annual Halloween Dance with over 350 tickets sold. Members were involved in advertising, selling tickets, costume contests, decorations. Many council members were given the opportunity to participate in Annual Veterans Day assembly, flag folding ceremony. They held a drive for Dedham Food Pantry and collected over 2700 items for the pantry. They are planning an 8th grade Winter Ball, and encourage participation of all students. The goal is for half the eighth grade class to attend the dance. Other activities include fund raising for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society— pennies for patients. Spirit Week is held in March with DMS Pride Day. 50% of student population made honor roll for the first term.

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

none

CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair attended the Civics Connection at Vinny T's recently and wanted to acknowledge the work of David Gordon.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Ms. White offered her congratulations to the Varsity Football Game for the exciting win over Norwood on Thanksgiving Day. The senior class of 2010 held a pie and wreath sale and brought in about \$800.00 each. There is a DHS Parent Organization meeting on Monday, December 7th regarding how to pay for college. This is sponsored by the PTO and MA Educational and Financial Authority. The Drama Club is putting on two performances of "Working" this weekend. The Fall Sports Banquet is Tuesday, December 8th.

REPORTS

Update on Athletic League Issues – Mr. Arria

They have met several times since last June. Similar ideas are still circulating, such as; once around league scheduling, dividing teams within the league based on strength of program, and possibly adding teams in to create a 3-tier system. These are all somewhat on hold waiting on the football playoff system currently moving through MIAA committees. There are concerns among coaches this will lead to breaking up leagues for the sake of state championships and tournaments. Both Mr. Arria and Mr. Santamaria are looking for support to add teams to the league. But there is some resistance out there due to the league busting that is currently going on.

An informal vote was taken by the Athletic Directors to support the new football proposal to bring back for feedback, and Dedham was the only one who voted approval. This proposal passed today to go to the next level, which is more talking. Discussion continued with some questions asked: When is the next meeting – athletic directors meet once a month. What is the governing body for the Bay State Conference? - There is a Constitution – it was updated in 2006. How can we get the discussion moving forward? - Until the issue with football is resolved the rest is in a holding pattern. Football is driving the bus.

Sustainability Committee Presentation: Liz O'Donnell, Chairman of Sustainability Committee. We are an advisory committee to the Board of Selectmen. Our mission is to educate businesses, residences on energy conservation and sustainability. The committee has a grant from the state to run an Anti-Idling Campaign. It's unhealthy and against the law so they are working on a campaign to educate the parents. Safe Routes program is currently being run at Greenlodge. This program offers two benefits – sustainability and health. Fewer cars in front of the school and children are walking for exercise. They would like to see this program expand to the other schools. Virginia LeClair spoke about another program from NSTAR – Change a Light Program. This program is a fundraiser for the schools. It is an educational campaign on energy saving light bulbs. It was determined that Virginia LeClair would be the liaison to the Superintendent for any curriculum items. Discussion was held on erecting “anti-idling” signs at each of the schools. A suggestion was made to work with the Superintendent and Mr. Lynch to determine the best location. Ms. LeClair brought the Committee up to date on the town-wide initiative to improve energy efficiency in the school buildings and all the other municipal buildings.

MINUTES

Motion was made to approve the November 18, 2009 minutes by Ms. Driscoll and seconded by Mr. Healy.
Approved: Unanimous with corrections

DONATIONS

none

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

None

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ACTION ITEMS

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Healy reported that on Monday, Nov. 23rd the Policy Sub-Committee met to review recommended adjustments for admission to the National Honor Society. Co-advisors Margolis and Young explained the past criteria for NHS, the changes in the grading policy at DHS, and the effects on the class of 2010 and 2011 who are the only two classes affected by the change in grading and additional AP course offerings. To address equity issues for the classes of 2010 and 2011, the advisors and administration recommended to the Policy Sub Committee to apply a new rubric for this year's admission to NHS. The Policy Sub Committee approved the recommendation and voted to recommend the approval to the School Committee for a committee vote.

Motion was made on the recommendation by Mr. Healy and seconded by Ms. Connolly. Approved: Unanimous

ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

December 16th.

Update on Class rank and weighted GPA

A reminder from Superintendent Doe on a Special Education Parent Group meeting on December 10th at 9a.m. and 7:00 p.m. at Avery.

Dancing with the Stars is this Saturday night at Mosley's.

The Board of Selectmen will be holding a swearing in ceremony for the new Fire Chief Monday Dec. 7th 7:00 p.m. at the Middle School. A reception will be held afterwards at the American Legion Post.

Parent consent forms for flu clinic need to be sent back.

The Chair announced the need to enter into Executive Session: Exemption 3

Motion made by Mr. Healy and seconded by Ms. Driscoll: Vote conducted by roll call: Mr. Ryan-yes, Mr. Coughlin-yes, Mr. Heisler-yes, Ms. Driscoll-yes, Mr. Healy-yes, Ms. Connolly-yes, Mr. Roberts-yes.

Open meeting adjourned at: 8:43 p.m.