

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
REMOTE MEETING

EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES

September 16, 2020

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENT via REMOTE PARTICIPATION:

Lisa Laprade, Chair

Tracey White, Vice-Chair

Steve Bilafer

Mayanne Briggs

Joshua Donati

Dr. Melissa Pearrow

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ABSENT:

None

MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION REMOTELY PRESENT:

Michael J. Welch, Superintendent

Dr. Ian Kelly, Assistant Superintendent

Sam Rippin, Assistant Superintendent for Business & Finance

Meeting Location: Remote Meeting

Remote meeting commenced at 7:05 p.m.

Ms. Laprade called the remote Executive Session to order. A roll call attendance was taken:

Steve Bilafer- Present

Mayanne Briggs - Present

Joshua Donati - Present

Dr. Melissa Pearrow - Present

Tracey White, Vice-Chair- Present

Lisa Laprade, Chair- Present

Victor Hebert - Present

Supt. Welch informed that since remotely learning has been indefinitely postponed a decision needs to be made regarding preschool. Remote learning does not work for this age group. The DELTA (Dedham Early Learning Teaching Academy) will continue in-person programming. All DELTA students have

been tested for COVID-19. If we don't allow 3 and 4 year old programs to run at the ECEC we will need to lay off teachers. CARES funding will not cover tuition loss of a program.

The Committee discussed testing for all Preschool students and staff to return to an in-person learning environment.

Superintendent Welch has discussed the Preschool situation with Board of Health Director Bridget Sweet and Dedham Education Association President Tim Dwyer. He also spoke with the Preschool teachers today.

Bridget Sweet stated the Town has been provided with 200 free saliva tests. She would be willing to prioritize the use of these to the schools.

Supt. Welch noted the need for the Board of Health's recommendation to allow Preschool students back to school. An emergency meeting may be called for this agenda item.

Supt. Welch stated the laying off of Preschool teachers will cause a ripple effect across the District due to bumping rights.

The Committee discussed the earliest possible start date of September 28. The Committee discussed the effect this decision could have on other grades wanting to return to in-person learning. (If "they can, why can't we" scenario.)

The Committee discussed if budgetary funds could be moved around to cover the Preschool tuition losses. Mr. Rippin explained they could not.

Mr. Bilafer asked if they would need approval from DESE to start in-person learning. The Superintendent said they did not. The Commissioners recommendation is to consider remote learning if the district is in a "red" status.

The Committee discussed how this decision might affect other parents in the district (Special Education and Athletics.) The Board may experience some parent blowback.

Supr. Welch stated that if a decision was not made for Preschool, parents will back out and the program will not be sustainable.

Ms. Briggs motioned to close the remote Executive Session of September 16, 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, Vice-Chair- Yes

Lisa Laprade, Chair - Yes

Motion passed 6-0

Remote Executive Session concluded at 7:20 p.m. The Committee returned to the regular meeting.