

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING—June 25, 2008
Lower Conference Room, Town Hall

PRESENT

Tracy Driscoll, Chair
Margaret Matthews, Vice Chair
David Roberts
Margaret Connolly
Joanne Flatley

ADMINISTRATION

June M. Doe, Superintendent
Cynthia Kelly, Asst. Superintendent
Christopher Campbell, Asst. Superintendent,
Michael La Francesca, Business Manager
Jacob Santamaria, Assistant Principal
John Murray, Assistant Principal

Convened: 7:00 PM

Adjourned: 10:00 PM

Taken out of order.

DONATION

Mr. Keaney presented the School Department with a copy of the book, *The Civilization of Love*, written by Carl A. Anderson, the Supreme Knight of the Knights of Columbus. He stated the copy was designated for the High School Library. He also donated two copies to the Town for the libraries.

The committee thanked him for the donation.

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Ms. Doe stated the principals reported successful conclusions to the school year. She stated that schools closed on Wednesday, June 18. She thanked teachers and support staff for their efforts during the school year. She wished the students a happy summer and encouraged them to read and complete their math assignments

Ms. Doe stated that there are enrichment and remediation programs taking place this summer. They are running TREK and two math programs. She stated one math program is for grade 8 students transitioning into 9th grade. She said the other is for students weak in math. She announced Mr. Murray would be running a remediation program in July as well.

Ms. Doe stated that the School Building Rehabilitation Committee (SBRC) has requested that in preparation of the specifications for the Owner's Project Manager (OPM) the scope of the new project be as clearly defined as possible. She stated that Ms. Sullivan has worked with the administration to lay out the programmatic needs for the new school and the recommendation is to give direction to the SBRC to identify the scope as up to 375 students. Ms. Doe said it was explained to Sean Walsh of the Mass. School Building Authority that a couple of factors are guiding this: redistricting and the opening of a second significant housing development. She said that these factors do not allow the administration to accurately predict the increase and therefore they would like to allow for a greater number of students than currently enrolled at the school. She reported that Mr. Walsh said the MSBA is flexible and they would be able to proceed with this.

Mr. Roberts said this is a key part of the project. He and Mr. La Francesca have spent a lot of time on this.

Ms. Matthews asked if these are much more specific guidelines than the last project. Mr. Roberts answered absolutely. He said he was taken aback by the specificity of the guidelines. He said they printed off 65 pages of guidelines to go through.

Ms. Flatley asked if they are committing to all of the specifics. Ms. Doe directed their attention to the guidelines that were distributed this evening. She said they have lots of caveats built into the document. It is a flexible plan and the MSBA has final approval. Mr. La Francesca said the student number of up to 375 will determine the square footage and the maximum size of the project for the request for service (RFS).

Ms. Matthews clarified this is up to 375 and would include numbers for special education programs. Ms. Doe said it was and would accommodate both special education and English language learning programs. Mr. Roberts said this would give them a component for the RFS and allows them to move forward.

Mr. Roberts asked that it be voted to be on the safe side.

Mr. Roberts moved, seconded by Ms. Connolly, and it was

VOTED: to accept the recommendation to project the Avery School enrollment to be up to 375 students.

Ms. Doe announced the appointment of Mr. Santamaria as the new principal of Dedham High School. Mr. Santamaria said he is honored and excited to lead the High School. He was congratulated by the committee.

Ms. Matthews asked if they are searching for his replacement. He said that process is under way. A search committee has been put together.

Ms. Doe said she has been working for two and half months interviewing to fill 32 professional positions for the 2008-2009 school year. She said they are trying to bring the best people on board. They have filled some positions, but they are still recruiting for science, which is proving to be a challenge.

CHAIR'S UPDATE

Ms. Driscoll this Saturday is the election for the senior center. She said the School Committee is looking forward to having neighbors at the Dexter property.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ACTION ITEMS

There was none.

Ms. Driscoll stated the committee would not be voting on the Superintendent's goals tonight. She also stated there would be a presentation on academic reporting, but no vote.

RECOMMENDATION – ACADEMIC REPORTING COMMITTEE

Mr. Santamaria began the presentation by thanking Ms. McCormick and the Academic Reporting Committee for their efforts. He said it has been a long process with many meetings and discussions. He said the last meeting on June 12 was very productive and the committee came to a consensus on many of issues. He said they hope to put the best system into place for the entire student body.

Ms. McCormick also thanked those involved in this study, particularly guidance counselors Mr. Wolfson, Ms. McGrann and Ms. Andrews, parents and teachers.

Ms. McCormick reviewed the background leading up to the proposed recommendations. She said the changes voted at the April 9 meeting was that the High School would retain class rank, the present system of cumulative quality points will be replaced with a weighted GPA, all students will have both an unweighted and a weighted GPA, AP courses will be assigned more weight than honors courses, grade designations in the A range would be changed, and Level 1 and 2 courses would be replaced with College Prep I and II. She added that a statement would be written on the transcript directing readers to examine Dedham's profile for changes in academic reporting. She stated the implementation of these changes must still be decided.

Ms. McCormick stated that since the May meeting, the administrative team, the GPA subcommittee, and additional interested parents met to discuss unresolved thoughts on the GPA and class rank implementation questions. They have agreed there is more to be done and there were other issues that came to light. She said some of these issues were bigger than what their charge was and the intention is to move forward with what they could to address the matters at hand.

Ms. McCormick stated that final class rank would be determined after the conclusion of the student's senior year. She referenced Plans A and B presented at the last presentation and said that talking after talking about these issues, they felt comfortable putting forward the equivalent to Plan A to begin with the class of 2012. She stated the valedictorian and salutatorian would be chosen at the end of third term. She stated transfer students will only be included in class rank if the student completes at least two full academic years at Dedham High School and the student begins his or her senior year at the High School and remains until the Class Rank list is published in the fall.

Ms. McCormick stated that class rank implementation beginning with the class of 2009 would be reported in a decile range (top 10%, 20%, etc.) rather than a specific rank order. The school profile will show a graph illustrating the distribution of students. She said they recommend continuing to calculate class rank based on quality point totals for the classes of 2011, 2010, and 2009. Ms. McCormick showed a possible example of a rank distribution chart to be used and the QPA distribution for the classes of 2009-2011.

Ms. McCormick stated the unweighted GPA implementation was also addressed. She said that beginning with 2008-2009 school year, transcripts will always include the unweighted GPA for the class of 2012 and beyond. She said if the weighted GPA is higher than the unweighted, it will also be included. She noted the unweighted GPA has been aligned.

Ms. McCormick discussed the weighted GPA. She stated that the committee is recommending that beginning with the class of 2012 Quality Points will be eliminated. She said the basic characteristics are College Prep I classes will be given even weight, Honors and College Prep II

classes will receive a “bump” relative to CP I, AP classes will receive a “bump” beyond Honors and all leveled classes will be included.

Ms. McCormick discussed the rationale for the weighted GPA, which is based in part on the UMass system of calculating GPA. She said from the level 1 baseline UMass adds .5 for honors classes. She said the new system provides as meaningful a number as the UMass model while acknowledging the difference between CP I and CP II at the High School.

Ms. McCormick provided the proposed weighted GPA chart for the class of 2012 and beyond. She noted the CP I column was the baseline and clarified the bumps. She also provided the committee with a comparison between the UMass and the new Dedham High School weighted GPA systems. She pointed out the differences, include the AP A+.

Ms. McCormick then addressed the class withdrawal procedure. She said they are proposing that students who leave after the beginning of the academic year may transition into a more appropriate level of the same class at any time, subject to administrative approval. She said classes subsequently affected by a schedule change for this reason will not be reflected on the student’s transcript or calculated into his/her GPA.

Ms. McCormick addressed class withdrawal before the add/drop deadline. She stated that this deadline is the end of the second week of the academic year. A student may add or drop any class, without notation on their transcript or effect to their GPA. Class withdrawal after the withdrawal deadline is subject to administrative approval. She said a student who is removed from a class at any point after the withdrawal deadline will have either a Withdraw Passing (WP) or Withdraw Failing (WF) noted on their end of year transcript.

Mr. Roberts asked for the rationale for moving to a percentile for class rank. Ms. McCormick stated that the committee discussed how they could ensure the student is truly represented in their grade. The thought was that doing it numerically may penalize student. They felt the percentile range was a more accurate reflection of their status. She said many schools do not even use class rank any more, but they want to continue it at Dedham High School. Mr. Santamaria added that a lot of the discussion came back to class rank. He said the numerical ordering would be difficult with the new system.

Ms. Driscoll clarified this is new and has not been presented to the School Committee before. Ms. McCormick said the reason for the new proposal is that consensus was reached by the committee on this; it is clearly the direction they want to move in. She said they do not want to implement it today, only to change in future years.

Ms. Flatley asked who the class rank is reported to. Mr. Santamaria said it is reported to colleges and students. At graduation time, the number one and two students will be chosen. Ms. Flatley asked if that was fair to numbers one and two when they are only presented in the top 10%. She said there is value to having the numerical representation. Ms. McCormick said the decile range was the happy medium.

Ms. Matthews said traditionally the top ten students’ names have been published in the *Mirror*. She said the top five students might get something out of ranking, but the rest not as much. She asked if the students were interested in hanging onto the numerical ranking. Mr. Santamaria said there was unanimous support for maintaining class rank. They do want healthy competition. He said colleges see both numerical and decile. He pointed out that a college is going to look differently at the top student in a class of 74 versus 600. Ms. Matthews asked if there should be a

number one and two identified at college application time. Ms. McCormick said that is worthy of discussion, but reiterated that some schools do not even rank. Mr. Murray said the bottom line is the rigor of the class combined with the decile would reflect them well and would not negatively impact these students, even the valedictorian and the salutatorian. He also stated the students do pay attention to their GPA and figure their rank among themselves.

Ms. Driscoll said the decile ranking works when there is big gap. If there is not much difference among the students it might set them up to not work as hard if there were a numerical ranking.

Ms. Connolly said when this was discussed she was unaware there would not be a numerical ranking as well. She said she wants to do whatever presents their students the best. She said you could also show the top 5%. Ms. McCormick said that is still open to discussion. She said they could identify that numerically there are six students that fall in this range, ten in another, as an example.

Mr. Roberts said the scholarship committee in Town has asked for class rank for its consideration in making scholarship decisions. He said they will have to be made aware of this. Ms. McCormick said they will be able to recognize the ranking of their students, so however the committee wants to represent it is fine.

Ms. Flatley asked how students know their rank. Ms. McCormick said it is run in January and June. The students can ask for their rank as early as January of their freshmen year.

Ms. Connolly said she would like to see something put in place to prevent freshmen from receiving their class rank. Ms. Andrew responded that students might need to know something about their ranking that year for National Honor Society.

Ms. McCormick said the other side of the conversation is trying to maintain healthy competition. Ms. Andrew said they do not have many asking anyway. Ms. Matthews asked if private schools ask for it. Ms. Andrew said they do not.

There was some discussion as to why they determined to identify final class rank at the end of term three. It was for early decision applications.

Ms. Flatley asked why they selected the UMass system. Ms. McCormick said many students apply to state system and many other schools do it this way as well.

Ms. Connolly said she disagrees with proposed weighted GPA chart. She thinks honors classes are harder and it does not reward students for taking these classes. Mr. Santamaria said the colleges want to see the most intense course the student can take. She said a B in an Honors class should be worth more than an A in CP I. Ms. McCormick said there were a couple of factors considered. She said, first, the rigor of the class taken is the most important. She said institutions are looking for the most rigorous courses and want to see students challenging themselves. She said the counselors are encouraging students to promote to the next level. She said another factor is this is something that is a work in progress. The key piece in the conversation is the difference between inflating grade and a true picture of where the students are and where they are going. She said that whatever is instituted would be kept for a few years. Ms. Connolly feared colleges would look at decile before they looked closely at specific courses. Ms. Flatley said she agrees they need to have a system that rewards students for challenging themselves.

Ms. Matthews said she trusts the administration knows the market value of what they are doing. Ms. McCormick said they do. Ms. Connolly said some colleges have admitted that they sort by decile first and look closely later.

Ms. Doe said the charge of the district is to improve achievement and set high standards. It is their job to determine how to put the students in the most challenging courses for them. She said this is not about class and grades, it is about the quality of what they learn and the quality of the work they do.

Ms. Flatley said she understood that, but the reality is do they have the staff to make sure these students are at the right level and are they successful in getting these students to take the appropriate coursework. Ms. McCormick said the process is a multi tiered process. There is a teacher recommendation, parent review and guidance counselor recommendation. She said it is happening.

Ms. Flatley asked how often a parent goes against a recommendation and if a parent ever supports going lower. Ms. McCormick said they are apt to ask to go up. Mr. Santamaria said one of the goals is to see the student to be successful. He said they want students to pursue higher education. Mr. Murray said the AP levels have had higher than anticipated enrollments in some sections. He said the students are pushing themselves.

Ms. Matthews asked in multi tier process do they look at students holistically, and, if so, how often. Ms. McCormick said they do and it depends on the situation. She said it is generally done around course selection time. She said there are situations where the teacher will come to the guidance counselor and recommend higher level due to student performance. Students have also done this. Ms. Matthews recommended doing it earlier in year.

Ms. Connolly said QPA chart used now if someone gets an A in CPI 17 points, B in honors 17 points. She said that seems fairer. Ms. McCormick said that is one of the points they are trying to address. Ms. McCormick said when they are advising students on college selection, there are no colleges that give a B the weight of an A. Feels that is a separate issue. Ms. Andrew said unweighted GPA students are told it is going to be recalculated by colleges. Must guess what colleges will calculate. They are trying to get close to what a college is going to do. Colleges do not give a full point for honors versus CPI. Full point would be inflating. Ms. Doe stated that no matter what they do colleges will always recalculate the GPA. Ms. McCormick said they are trying to give the students the most accurate picture.

Mr. Roberts said that it does depend on school. He said if a student is going to RPI the college will look at the transcript differently. Ms. McCormick agreed that even among the state schools they look at the transcript differently.

Ms. Driscoll said the problem with the chart is they have made up their own instead of sticking with a .5 bump for honors and another .5 for AP. She feels they should go along with districts' most common chart.

Ms. Matthews said all leveled classes will be included in the GPA. Ms. McCormick said unleveled courses, such as ELL, health, and physical education classes would not be included and colleges do not look at those. Ms. Matthews asked if the classes with only one level still would count towards GPA. Ms. McCormick said they would, but the topic remains part of the discussion.

Ms. Driscoll asked for the timeline for looking at this. Mr. Santamaria said they need to settle the implementation first and then they could work on this, among other issues.

Ms. Matthews said she likes the decile, but supports identifying the top five. She thinks there is value in identifying these students.

Ms. Driscoll said they were going to vote whether to implement the weighted GPA just for 2012 or for all four classes. She said they cannot vote on that tonight, as three members with students in the school would have to recuse themselves. She said that would leave two members who can vote, but that is not enough to do so. She said they would address it early next week.

Ms. Driscoll stated there is a new recommendation relating to class rank. Mr. Roberts asked when they would need a decision regarding class rank. Ms. McCormick said that, for all matters put forward, the sooner the better. She said they should have a system in place for the new class. Mr. Roberts said if they are including class rank question, Mr. Ryan and Mr. Healy would need to be apprised of this recommendation. Ms. McCormick said they could do this. She said that the conversation about class rank and implementation has been ongoing for some time. Ms. Driscoll stated they did vote to keep class rank as it was. They can consider changing to decile. She said she would like to continue discussion of the GPA chart.

Ms. Connolly asked if there was anything they could vote tonight. There was not. Mr. Roberts said that the key element is the class of 2012. Ms. Connolly said they need this information to prepare the handbook. Mr. Santamaria said they are not printing the handbook; it will be available on-line.

Ms. Driscoll said they would like to meet on Monday at 6:30. Mr. Murray said they would do the tutorial and present this for a vote then. Mr. Santamaria said that the last meeting everyone was in agreement that they should move forward with this recommendation. Ms. McCormick said students were ok with the way they were proposing to do class rank. Ms. Connolly said there was not parent consensus on the chart. Ms. Driscoll said they should look at that still.

The committee took a short break at 8:40 PM.

RECOMMENDATION – MATH CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

Mr. Campbell stated that *Everyday Math* has been recommended by the Math Curriculum Committee. He stated that most adults admit to having hated math when in they were in school and a very high percentage of middle school children would prefer to do anything but math.

Mr. Campbell said that *Everyday Mathematics* was developed by the University of Chicago School Mathematics Project (UCSPMP). He stated that research found that children learn best when it is relevant and hands on. He said this math program provides the broad math background needed in the 21st century.

Mr. Campbell said the fundamental goal of UCSMP is to improve math education for the vast majority of school children in the United States. He said the program provides a problem solving approach based on everyday situations. He said concepts are revisited regularly and mastery is developed over time. He said the program includes frequent practice of basic skills, often through games and activities. He said the lessons are based on activities and discussion, not a textbook. He stated students would be required to develop a math journal and otherwise use a variety of math tools. He stated the program has reference books for the students.

Mr. Campbell stated that *Everyday Math* includes content that goes beyond basic arithmetic. He said the research findings were that typical curriculums are arithmetic driven, slow paced, isolate skills, and broad without depth of content. He said children are capable of learning more mathematics in a richer curriculum and all children can be successful mathematical thinkers. He said that math is meaningful when it is varied, rich and rooted in real problems and applications.

Mr. Campbell reviewed the *Everyday Math* program routines. These include frames and arrow, fact triangles, “What’s My Rule?” and name-collection boxes. These concepts were illustrated in the PowerPoint presentation. Mr. Campbell stated that frames and arrows help children identify rules.

Ms. Matthews commented that she liked the rule identification. She asked if this was different from the current curriculum. Mr. Campbell responded that it is not a new concept; the students are introduced to it, but the frames and arrows are introduced as a routine.

Mr. Campbell reviewed the function machine, the fact triangle, the name-collection box and multiple algorithms.

Mr. Campbell stressed that parental involvement is important. He said the program includes suggestions for classroom volunteering, parent letters, assisting with home and study links, playing games at home, practice fact triangle cards, and reading math literature books. He said parents could visit www.WrightGroup.com for more information.

Ms. Kelly provided the committee with an explanation of the handouts. She said this successful program is 17 years old. She said the district would be purchasing texts with a 2007 copyright. She listed districts currently using the program, which has been aligned to the Massachusetts state frameworks and correlated to the standards. Ms. Kelly said teachers would have this information and it is on the website.

Ms. Kelly discussed the assessment handbook and the home connection handbook. She said parents are not expected to instruct students, but are given enough material to review with their children. She said they also have a differentiation handbook for ELL and special education students. She said there is a “minute” math book so students can do some listening and mental math for grades 1-2. Ms. Clement added that once the student reaches grade 3 there is a different book for every grade.

The committee was provided with a proposal from the sales rep. Ms. Kelly said they would like to introduce this program in kindergarten and grade one with one pilot in grade 2. Mr. Campbell said the professional development piece is included in this. He said there is ongoing professional development with initial exposure to staff not doing the training this year. It is intensive for those using it this year.

Ms. Kelly stated the Math Curriculum Committee looked at over a dozen different programs. She said many teachers visited schools using the program, including Wayland, Norwood, Easton Hopkinton, and Canton. She said the impressions were very favorable. Ms. Doe said there would be a full day professional development on August 26. She said grades 1 and 2 would train together and the kindergarten teachers would receive separate training. She said a follow up training would be scheduled in December and there would be access to the trainer as needed.

Ms. Connolly asked if the training was available with Trailblazers. Ms. Clement said they did have implementation professional development. She said they did not have follow up for new

staff. She added that the program provides the tools they need to provide the training. Ms. Doe said another change has been the grade level meetings. She said this supports consistency across the district. She said the added assessment piece is also good. She noted there would be four grade 2 pilots, one in each school.

Ms. Driscoll asked if they would add grades to the program as they move forward. Ms. Doe said they would try to add two grades each year.

Ms. Matthews how they decided on this program. Ms. Doe answered because it is teacher based. Ms. Kelly said Trailblazers was eliminated because it did not work. Mr. Campbell said *Everyday Math* supports student achievement. He said it has a family component, differentiation, and supports math computation. He said it better prepares the students for current math knowledge.

Ms. Connolly asked other communities' MCAS scores were considered when looking at other programs. Ms. Kelly said that towns consistently doing well do use this program. Ms. Kelly added that most math programs correlate theirs to national standards. This one correlates to state standards. Ms. Doe said the standards are covered in the lessons, which is a program strength. Ms. Kelly said the newest parent to the curriculum committee had worked with this program in Chicago and was able to answer a lot of questions for the teachers.

Ms. Connolly said it looks like a good program and hoped they could fund more grades sooner. She would like to progress faster. Ms. Flatley agreed with Ms. Connolly and hoped to get the program in place through grade 5.

Ms. Flatley asked about the training. Ms. Kelly said the kindergarten teachers have to go to Holbrook as the training was already arranged. There would be a follow up ten to twelve weeks later.

Ms. Flatley asked what the plan is for new teacher in future years. Ms. Doe said they have training at multiple sites and they would make sure they were trained in the program.

Ms. Flatley said it is very visual and has a strong differentiated program. She asked if special education teachers would be given training. Mr. Campbell said they are going to train the specialists. Ms. Doe said they are not limited to the number of teachers they train. She said it was a good suggestion to have the upper grades trained for this as well.

Ms. Flatley asked what is next for the committee. Ms. Kelly answered they would continue to evaluate it and move it up into higher grades.

Ms. Matthews said it appeared Trailblazers implementation was uneven. She said they would need consistency to be successful. Ms. Kelly said every school was involved. Ms. Doe said the other important thing to remember is that is available for their ELL students. She said parent letters are translated into other languages.

Mr. Roberts asked how many months of study the recommendation reflects. Ms. Kelly replied that the committee has been meeting for 18 months. He said he hoped the administrative team would ensure the program was implemented district wide.

Ms. Flatley added she would like to hear the administration's comments about adding another grade. Mr. Campbell said they did look at that. Ms. Doe said they had other obligations to

purchase textbooks in math and social studies at the secondary level. She said they did the best they could with their resources. She said they could try for grades 2, 3 and 4 next year.

Ms. Flatley asked if the transition to the new program was workable. Ms. Doe answered they are standards based programs. Ms. Clement said that Trailblazers implementation was difficult because it was a change to a standards based curriculum. She said a weakness was in differentiated curricula. She said this is addressed and the transition should not be dramatic. She added that the publisher is in it for the long haul and would be able to maintain support.

Ms. Flatley moved, seconded by Ms. Matthews, and it was

VOTED: to accept the recommendation for *Everyday Math*.

Ms. Doe said they will be able to put the materials into the hands of the teachers over the summer.

The curriculum committee was thanked for its work, particularly Ms. Clement.

ECEC RATE INCREASE PROPOSAL

Ms. Flatley stated the Budget Subcommittee has thoroughly reviewed the proposals to increase the child care rate and full day kindergarten tuition at the ECEC. She stated the administration's recommendation is to increase the child care rate to \$7 per hour. She said the increase is not easy for families to absorb, but changes in the program's costs have necessitated it. She said the program must support itself while remaining competitive. She noted that the district is not required by the state to provide a childcare program.

Ms. Flatley said the administration will need to continue close monitoring of the budget. The subcommittee is recommending the rate increase to \$7 per hour with the understanding it would cover at least two years of operation. She said they would continue to meet with Mr. La Francesca on this account.

Ms. Flatley moved, seconded by Ms. Matthews, and it was

VOTED: to increase the child care cost to \$7 per hour for the coming year, 2008-2009.

Ms. Flatley stated the current recommendation is to increase the full day kindergarten tuition to \$3,500 per year. She stated the increase is necessary for many of the same reasons as the child care increase. She said it is a strong program; the demand is high but the rates have not been adjusted to keep up with the rising costs of utilities and salaries. She reported there has not been a rate increase for two years. She stated the Budget Subcommittee would work with the budget manager on an ongoing basis to ensure the costs are fairly assigned. She noted that the current full day kindergarten rate is \$3,065.

Ms. Matthews asked if they were sure the rate would serve the program's needs for two years. Ms. Flatley said the child care program is less stable than the kindergarten program. She said it does depend on the contract that is signed as well as the utilities, but if students remain in the program they should be able to support it. She said given that the economy is in a recession the possibility exists they could be impacted. She said they would closely monitor it.

Mr. La Francesca informed Ms. Matthews that 94 students is the break even point for the program. He said they have 91 students this year and are adding a class next year. He said any

additional child over 94 would be additional revenue. He said they are confident the ECEC would get at least that many students. Ms. Doe said it is important to emphasize it is based on their knowledge today.

Ms. Matthews asked how competitive their kindergarten rate is. Ms. Flatley said it is competitive, but the district partially supports the program by virtue of their obligation to offer half day kindergarten. Mr. La Francesca said they are on the low end. Ms. Connolly stated that before parents registered their children they were informed of the strong possibility of an increase. Ms. Driscoll said that was the case for childcare, not kindergarten. Ms. Flatley said child care is different, but it is competitive due to the resources available as part of a public school.

Ms. Matthews moved, seconded by Ms. Flatley, and it was

VOTED: to accept an increase to \$3,500 for full day kindergarten, which will take effect in 2008.

SUPERINTENDENT'S GOALS

This agenda item was postponed.

DRAFT 2008-2009 SCHOOL COMMITTEE CALENDAR

Ms. Driscoll said they have come up with proposed meeting dates based on the second and fourth Wednesdays. She said the exceptions would be November, which would include meetings on the first and the third Wednesdays, and there would be only one meeting in December. She said with this schedule, they avoid the June graduation and vacation weeks as well. Ms. Connolly said schools would be made aware of the calendar to avoid scheduling events on these dates.

Barring unforeseen conflicts, it was decided these would be the dates for next year.

MINUTES

The vote on the June 11 minutes was postponed until the next meeting. They were not included in the School Committee's packets.

DONATIONS

Ms. Doe announced a donation from Dedham Junior Woman's Club of \$500 for encyclopedias for the Dedham High School Library. She thanked the group for this gift. She said they also have the donation from Mr. Keane. Mr. Keane stated the author is donating all proceeds to an unrestricted charity fund.

Ms. Doe announced that the Dedham Exchange donated \$1000 for library books. She expressed her gratitude for this very generous donation.

Ms. Matthews moved, with grateful appreciation, seconded by Ms. Connolly, also with grateful appreciation, and it was

VOTED: to accept the \$1,000 from the Dedham Women's Exchange, \$500 from the Dedham Junior Woman's Club and Mr. Keane's book, *A Civilization of Love*, for the library.

Ms. Connolly remarked that circulation at the library is up significantly, 335%. She said she is impressed.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Doe said the School Committee received data in their packet on students exiting the system. She stated the students' names are omitted. The information includes reasons for leaving the system as well as the numbers. She said that historically there are students in the 20 range that go to parochial schools. She noted that they do not see spikes and drops in the numbers and it is a pretty accurate picture of where the students go and why. She stated that at the end of the 2005-2006 school year, the parents of grade 6 and 7 students were contacted to invite in for exit meeting. She said she did not pick up substantial information from these meetings. She said it was mostly preference for their child's education or the child was accepted at private school. She said they do keep detailed data.

Ms. Flatley asked how many go to Blue Hills. Ms. Doe in past there was a higher number. Mr. La Francesca said now it is about 7. Ms. Doe said Norfolk Agricultural School attendance is increasing. She said they have developed a stronger relationship with them, which has led to the increase. Ms. Doe said she would like to see more at Blue Hills. Ms. Flatley asked if the district tracks these students' academic achievement. Ms. Kelly said that many have returned to the district, which Ms. Doe said is due to nonperformance. She said that is not true of the students from Norfolk Aggie. She said they do not track these students' academic records.

ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

Ms. Driscoll said the next meeting would be August 6. The agenda would include Station 250, the operating budget, and the Superintendent's goals. Ms. Doe was asked about the strategic plan. Ms. Doe replied that they could address it at the end of August. She said the committee would receive it ahead of time for review.

Ms. Driscoll said they would need a mini meeting next week to vote on academic reporting.

Ms. Matthews moved, seconded by Ms. Flatley, and it was

VOTED: to adjourn.