

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING April 29, 2009
Lower Conference Room, Town Hall

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
Michael La Francesca, Business Manager

Convened: 6:15 PM

Adjourned: 8:32 PM

Superintendent Doe opened the School Committee meeting and requested a motion to enter into executive session for the purpose of hearing a Level III grievance from Unit A.

Motion made by Mr. Roberts and seconded by Ms. Connolly and vote was taken by roll call: Mr. Ryan-yes, Mr. Coughlin-yes, Mr. Healy-yes, Ms. Connolly-yes, Ms. Driscoll-yes, Mr. Roberts-yes.

Open session: 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Driscoll opened the School Committee meeting and introduced Town Clerk, Paul Munchbach who swore in the new members, Dave Roberts, Kevin Coughlin and Joe Heisler.

Ms. Driscoll then stepped down as Chair and turned the meeting over to Superintendent Doe. She requested a motion from the Committee to nominate a Chair of the School Committee.

Motion made by Mr. Healy and seconded by Mr. Ryan to nominate Mr. Roberts as Chairman.

Vote taken by roll call: Mr. Ryan-yes, Mr. Coughlin-yes, Mr. Healy-yes, Mr. Heisler-present, Ms. Driscoll-yes, Ms. Connolly-yes, Mr. Roberts-yes. Motion Approved, Majority.

Mr. Roberts then requested a motion for nominations for Vice-Chair.

Motion made by Mr. Coughlin and seconded by Mr. Healy to nominate Ms. Connolly as Vice-Chair. Vote taken by roll call: Mr. Ryan-yes, Mr. Coughlin-yes, Mr. Healy-yes, Ms. Connolly-yes, Mr. Heisler-present, Ms. Driscoll-yes, Mr. Roberts-yes. Motion Approved, Majority.

Mr. Roberts welcomed the new members to the board. Mr. Coughlin – Thanks to my family for sticking by my side. Thank the voters for the opportunity to serve. Thanks to past members for all their hard work. Mr. Heisler - thanks to my wife who stuck with me through thick and thin. Thanks to the many people who helped him in his campaign. Thanks to past members for their service – the schools are better for them having been there. Mr. Roberts thanks for the votes, thanks to his family. Thanks to people who held signs and worked. I want to thank Mrs. Matthews and Mrs. Flatley – I have the utmost respect for them. I hope they stay involved. He also recognized Mrs. Driscoll for all her work and effort the past two years as Chair. It is not an easy job and she should be commended for her leadership and guidance. In particular, her leadership in the long and drawn out League change was outstanding. This should be a Civics lesson for students. Thank you, Mrs. Driscoll.

SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

Ms. Doe read a statement from the Nurse Leader, Gail Kelly that will also be communicated as a Connect Ed message and posted on the Dedham Public Schools website containing information to parents about the public health concern surrounding the swine flu.

The High School Art Department announced that five students have been recognized in this year's Boston Globe Scholastic Art Awards. Tanya Touchette won a Gold Key and honorable mention for two pieces and her Gold Key will go on to be judged at the National Level in New York. Marianna Walton won a Silver Key and honorable mention. Noor Sadeghi-Ray and Melissa Vo won honorable mentions. Mr. Santamaria introduced Mr. Sal Fazio and Ms. Jenny Kerns two art teachers at the high school. Tanya Touchette was present and introduced by Ms. Kerns. She has been accepted to the New England Institute of Art. Her graphic design piece is on display at the Dedham Savings Bank on Elm St. Reminder of the Town Art Show K-12 at the Middle School, on May 14th. Ms. Doe acknowledged the efforts of the Art Department for the district wide art fair last year. She could not be prouder of all the members of the art department for their extra efforts. Ms. Doe also wanted to mention the fantastic evening at last night's All Schools Chorus. The 5th grade students joined with the middle and high school choruses in an outstanding performance. Recognize Joe Brogan, Allyn Phelps, Brian Bigelow, Heather Kirby, Jeff Taylor, and Donald Heald. There is amazing talent in our teaching staff and fine arts department.

Elementary Schools:

On Friday, May 1, all elementary students will be going to the high school to see "Hero Art – Be Somebody" a program focusing on diversity. Thanks to Resource Officer Richie Hyler for securing the program for the students. Also, thanks to the PTO's for providing bus transportation. Dedham Civic Pride and the Sustainability Committee donated spruce trees and these trees will be taken care of by our students in an ongoing project. Thanks to the DPW who planted trees at the elementary schools for Earth Day. The first grade students in all elementary schools are awaiting the arrival of chick eggs. This is part of the science curriculum; the students will care for the eggs until the hatch.

Greenlodge: Kick-off of "Greenlodge Walking Wednesday" which is part of the "Safe Routes Program". This is designed to promote good health and cut down on school traffic. Mrs.

Tannetta coordinated the successful Book Fair. Total sales reached just over \$4000.00 and net profit of \$1300.00. The PTO will hold its annual Teacher Appreciation Luncheon next Friday.

Riverdale: Grade five students are having a wax museum focusing on the Revolutionary War on May 4th. Mr. Peter Reynolds will speak to first and second graders about writing on May 5th. Mr. Dellot is working with fifth grade students on building technology projects. Teacher appreciation week is May 4-8. The Riverdale International Spring Fair is on May 9th from 10-3p.m.

Avery: The Avery School Book Fair was very successful with total sales of \$3275 which allowed the library to purchase \$1956 in books and materials from Scholastic Inc. Thanks to the Book Fair Committee for their hard work. Mr. Phelps and Mrs. Biggar have started a walking club on Tuesday and Thursdays at lunch time. The Avery Family Fun Night will be on May 29th from 5-7pm.

ECEC: Open house will be held on May 5th for children enrolled for the 2009-2010 school year. The staff is preparing the kindergarten students for their transition to their neighborhood schools. Students will visit their school on June 9th and parents are invited to visit on June 10th. The pre-school staff is working on NAEYC re-accreditation.

Oakdale: The spring enrichment program started on Monday. Seventeen different classes are running this session. The 5th Grade Talent Show is tomorrow night. There are 19 acts. The show is at 6:00 p.m.

High School: Julia Burkey, Julia Burkett, Michael McCormick met the requirements to enter the 2010 National Merit Scholarship program. These students have shown outstanding academic potential and we are extremely proud of their accomplishments. The Junior/Senior Prom is on Friday May 15th at the Westin Hotel in Waltham. Bay State Conference Principals and Athletic Directors formed a sub-committee to discuss the possible re-alignment of the conference. An early May meeting date is being set. Dedham has two members on the sub-committee.

Student Government Day, tomorrow April 30th. The luncheon is being hosted at the Italian American Club and the facility was donated.

Supt. Doe wanted to recognize a noteworthy achievement of Jeff Taylor, Music teacher. He completed coursework in Music Technology and has been awarded Level One Certification by the Technology Institute for Music Technology. This puts him in an elite category among his peers.

CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Scully Awards are coming up on May 12th. Put on by the TV Production class.

Mr. Roberts asked for a motion to go into executive session for a contract to discuss prior to voting. Motion made by Mr. Ryan and seconded by Ms. Driscoll. Vote by roll call: Mr. Ryan-yes, Mr. Coughlin-yes, Mr. Healy-yes, Mr. Heisler-yes, Ms. Driscoll-yes, Ms. Connolly-yes, Mr. Roberts-yes.

Returned from Executive Session and entered back into open meeting.

Mr. LaFrancesca spoke on the highlights surrounding the custodian contract.

Motion made by Ms. Connolly and seconded by Mr. Healy to approve the custodian contract.

Approved: Unanimous

REPORTS

Ms. Driscoll reported on the Superintendent's evaluation for the time period of March 2008 – March 2009. All SC members (previous board) rated the Superintendent's on a rating system. She was evaluated in 6 areas. Overall performance rating was 3.5. There were 8 goals the Superintendent worked on and she met each and exceeded most. We look forward to another productive and successful year under the direction Superintendent Doe.

Elementary school lunches: The Budget sub-committee met and recommended an increase from \$2.00 to \$2.25. Last raise was two years ago. HS was increased last year. The surrounding school districts average is \$2.25.

Motion made by Mr. Ryan and seconded by Ms. Connolly to approve an increase in elementary school lunch prices to \$2.25. Approved: Unanimous

Mr. Morton Orlov presented an overview of the Massachusetts Math & Science Initiative Grant at the last meeting. We are prepared to go forward with the grant.

Motion made by Ms. Driscoll and seconded by Ms. Connolly to accept the grant from the MMSI.

Approved: unanimous

Final Budget – tabled

Discussion on Federal Stimulus money: The situation several teachers notified no positions available next year. We do have a plan with some of the money and would like to reassure some of these teachers that we are going to be able to restore some positions. Chapter 70 money keeps fluctuating – it has not been finalized but we are getting a small portion where before we were not getting anything. Decrease in Circuit Breaker from 72% to 50%. ARRA: IDEA and Title 1 Grant money. Two amounts to be received in July and in the Fall for FY11. We have attended 5 web conferences trying to establish what the guidelines are. We don't know what the final budget will be. Superintendent's plan is to expand team-based learning and bring into Middle School Model. We are creating a budget to take the program to next age group – salary, supplies and resources. We are also allowed to use some of the money to offset some of the OOD tuitions. We will bring this plan to DOE for approval. Discussed holding a Budget sub-committee meeting and get in another School Committee meeting prior to May 13th. Budget sub – next Wednesday morning – May 6th 8:30 a.m. and SC meeting for the evening.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Tim Dwyer, teaches social studies at HS and is also the President of DEA. He is here with a small delegation of teachers to present a petition: “We, the faculty with professional teacher status, fully support our DEA bargaining team to negotiate a fair contract with the Dedham School Committee”. It is signed by 150 members of tenured faculty. We bring this petition to emphasize that we the members are united to secure a fair contract. The bargaining team is honored to have full support of our colleagues. It is our desire to settle in fair and just manner and get on with the business of teaching. We look forward to working with new members and thank past members. We remain hopeful that a fair contract can be negotiated.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON ACTION ITEMS

None

MINUTES

Motion made by Ms. Connolly and seconded by Ms. Driscoll to accept the minutes from April 8th, 2009 meeting. Approved: Majority with Mr. Heisler and Mr. Coughlin abstain

DONATIONS

Dimitria Sullivan DEP President presented the Middle School library with a check for \$3500.00 for purchase of additional library books.

Mr. Andrew Morton, Social Studies Department Chair, received a donation for Student Government Day, from Mocha Java.

Motion to accept donations made by: Mr. Heisler and seconded by Mr. Ryan with grateful appreciation. Approved: Unanimous

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

none

Members to represent various sub-committees: Until reorganization sometime in June.

Tracy Driscoll – budget sub

Kevin Coughlin – finance and bill signing

Joe Heisler – policy sub

Negotiations: open

Motion made to accept updates to the Master plan to proceed with the MSBA process by Mr. Ryan and seconded by Mr. Healy. Approved: Unanimous

ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA

May 6th budget

May 13th –presentation and vote on educational model

Motion made by Mr. Ryan and seconded by Mr. Coughlin to enter into Executive Session under Exemption 3. Vote by Roll Call: Mr. Ryan-yes, Mr.Coughlin-yes, Mr. Healy-yes, Mr. Heisler, Ms. Driscoll-yes, Ms. Driscoll-yes, Mr. Roberts-yes.

Will not be returning to open meeting.