

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING— November 19, 2008**  
**Board of Selectmen Chambers**

**PRESENT**

**Tracy Driscoll, Chair**  
**Margaret Matthews, Vice Chair**  
**David Roberts**  
**Thomas Ryan**  
**Margaret Connolly**  
**Joanne Flatley**  
**John Healy**

**ADMINISTRATION**

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

**Convened: 7:00 PM**

**Adjourned: 8:50 PM**

Recognition of DHS marching band who are again, champions. Mr. Brogan and students are here. Congratulations to all the students in the Color Guard and the Marching Band. Drum Majors and Color Guard captains - Megan Mawe, Kara Downing, Sarah Kaplan, Julia Burkett – outstanding leaders. It was an exceptional year for us, but unusual – we only won one competition going into the finals. Hard work, practice on Tuesdays & Thursdays after schools and own them on the weekend. A lot of personal time invested.

Ms. Doe mentioned to the committee that she's seen Mr. Brogan on Norwood Cable TV – direct band in the summer time. College group. Dianne Burke (former MS teacher), through granting – started jazz group. Also, Mr. Brogan sings. Also, started a new music school at the Community House – private lessons for students and are starting adult classes. Battle of bands to be held at the Thanksgiving Football game.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

HS – Biotech Bus front of Auditorium. Tomorrow all the students will be working in lab. Grant funded. Dr. Kobierski is the lead teacher and two instructors come with the lab.

This morning we met with representatives from all PTO groups, all the Principals were there. The purpose was to recognize and thank all the parents for their support, public relations and their involvement in the schools. Presented strategic and district improvement plans. All principals have completed examining individual teacher goals. Everything is tied back to the specifics of the District Improvement Plan. Will try to structure another meeting in a couple of months to get a wider group to be able to participate due to work schedules.

Well into Term 2 – report cards are out. Teachers and Administrators are available to help parents with any concerns with student performance.

Launched a new initiative support and enhance writing in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades. We are able to do this with the help of Dr. Laflamme. He has agreed to work with elementary teachers to examine the writing of these students. Initiative is to help teachers develop increased writing proficiency in grade 4. Required to master multi-paragraph composition (for MCAS). We are very grateful to Dr. Laflamme for his expertise and willingness to do this.

We are nearing the completion of renovation of Youth Commission offices. Finishing touches put on this week. Once again the school maintenance team have performed an amazing transformation for staff of 4. Good example of the close working relationship between school and town. This is the second project with the town – we really do look for ways that the school can work with the town to be fiscally responsible and to work on facility management to save resources. Dave and Steve do an amazing job and the quality of their work, we couldn't ask for anything better.

HS update that the Principal's Advisory Council have put forth a proposal (pilot program) that would allow seniors who have a directed study hall to report to school at 8:44 when study meets in the first block of a cycle; and when having a study in afternoon – last block session, can leave. There are stipulations attached: Seniors participating must be on Honor roll, have no disciplinary referrals, written parental permission on file. Seniors will not be allowed to drop a class for the purpose of adding a directed study hall. Schedule Committee in place consisting of Administration, Dept. Chairs, guidance counselors, teachers, students who will be visiting area schools to observe the daily schedule, interview staff. A written report will be submitted to Mr. Santamaria summarizing the pros and cons of a variety of scheduling options. HS will be evaluating term grade breakdown and moving toward midterm exams in addition to final exams. Bob's Discount Furniture – donated \$450.00 to the wrestling program that was used to purchase leather love seat for super fan program. The goal is to raffle off luxury seating and pizza for home games for wrestling matches. All proceeds going to local food pantry and the Ronald McDonald House.

Elementary schools:

ECEC – collecting Toys for Tots, items to send to four soldiers who are Dedham residents, collecting tabs to donate to Shriner's Hospital, and holding a food drive.

Oakdale – visit from Fox 25 news helicopter landed and broadcast live from the Oakdale School and then went the gym for questions and answers. 5<sup>th</sup> grade student council is collecting Thanksgiving baskets, anonymous envelope from the George Glass Foundation that contained gift cards to be given to families in Oakdale.

Avery - working with several groups to provide dinners for needy families. The Motherbrook Group has teamed up with Firestone to help provide meals for these families. Oil change and tire rotation at Firestone. Youth Commission and Food Pantry are helping out families for the holidays. Thank you to all groups for their assistance and generosity to the Avery. 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are participating to MEFA art competition. Avery also received an anonymous envelope from the George Glass Foundation – gift certificates.

Greenlodge – participating in the Family Literacy program – Raising Readers. Today, the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade student councils delivered food to the Dedham Food Pantry. Thanks to Mr. Clinton and Noble and Greenough for providing transportation. Bay Colony Educators are presenting their authentic colonial program for grades 3-5.

Riverdale – classrooms have been performing plays, poetry and folktales revolving around the Thanksgiving theme. Parents were invited to see the specialists this week for art, music and PE. Mayanne Briggs received 3rd place in the Dancing with the Stars competition. Thanks to Mr. Murray as well.

All of the elementary schools are celebrating American Education Week. Parents invited for morning classes.

November 15<sup>th</sup> is America recycles day. Participating in a friendly recycling competition to see who can recycle the largest quantity. Great prizes awarded.

Middle School Evening courses update: 1<sup>st</sup> session concluded with 50 participants. Winter session will start in January.

VFW – essay contest. Why we should honor America's veterans? Winners from the 6<sup>th</sup> grade Tiger's team. Close to 80 students participated. Mary Kate Coughlin, Benjamin Springer, Katherine Graham. Each received a US Savings Bond.

Sunday evening – Athletic Hall of Fame dinner. Members to be recognized are the members of the 1967 football team; Former Teacher/Coach, Jerry Varnum; Police Chief Michael Weir and his daughter Kerriane Weir; Paul Baker; Denise Clifford, Tom Oscar Robinson, Barbara Cocci; Rosemary Griffiths Brennan; Bob Schreeve.

## **CHAIR'S UPDATE**

none

## GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

none

### REPORTS:

Mr. Arria – Athletic Director

HS Fall Summary Report: Field Hockey finished 3<sup>rd</sup> and qualified for state tournament. Goalie, Lindsay MacDonald, was named goalie of the year in her division. Golf team qualified for state tournament. Eric Dolt performed at the section meet. Boys and Girls Soccer both qualified for state tournament. Nicole Savi – reached the 100 point plateau and for the second year in a row was named Boston Globe All Scholastic. In addition she and her teammate, Patrice Vettori were named Eastern MA All-Stars and members of the All-State team. Nicole went on to be named part of the All New England Team. Out of the top 3 players, 2 were from Dedham. Kelly Gilmore, in her first year diving – finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in all of the Bay State Competitions.

MS Athletic Budget: Costs of running the program have been successful based on fundraising and donations. Some of them include: Clothing drive – Bay State Textiles in Dedham Plaza (looking for a new location to place trailer), School Store proceeds, and Five Guys Burgers and Fries. Regarding the budget, Coach stipends, transportation and referees are largest expense. Addressed questions regarding the philosophy of MS program –last year we went through tryout periods – 40 field hockey, 40 girls soccer, due to practical and financial reasons – had to make cuts. Would like everyone to participate. We will be starting 7<sup>th</sup> grade teams Expense of transportation, uniforms, equipment, coaches. The potential is there to double the budget if not making cuts.

Ms. Doe stated that there would be a proposal to the budget subcommittee to start building a budget for MS athletic programs.

Mr. Roberts asked what Mr. Arria's sense for feedback under definition of 'developmental' – coming down from HS coaches. Inviting teams to HS practices and games to see what its like. The cuts that were made are similar to the process for cuts made at the HS level.

Ms. Connolly was led to believe that the 8<sup>th</sup> graders would provide a feeder pool for 9<sup>th</sup> grade. They were told it would be a full participation program. Concern 8<sup>th</sup> graders being cut instead of 7<sup>th</sup> graders. Philosophy is not based on winning or losing. Mr. Arria commented that the philosophy has never been based on "winning", but there is ample opportunity for other sports at the HS. Parents and administrators should encourage the student to try another sport.

Mr. Ryan would like to see an 8<sup>th</sup> grade preference when having to implement cuts. Who picks MS coaches – Mr. Arria goes through the applicants and there is an interview process, w/Principal/Asst. Principal. Feel strongly programs should be developmental. Clinics with the HS athletes would make an impression on the MS athletes.

Ms. Flatley asked if we can keep 7<sup>th</sup> graders on the team for home games but doesn't travel for away games. Mr. Arria responded that other schools would not be willing to come to us. It is difficult to increase roster and giving adequate playing time. Problem filling coaches positions? No, it's a benefit having teachers as coaches. What is the user fee percentage? High.

Ms. Driscoll asked Mr. Arria to bring some ideas back to the committee on how to get more students participating – but not expensive ways, before making a financial commitment.

Tri-Valley League – Mr. Santamaria

Last update was on 11/5 including the Letter of Interest. Have received a return letter from the Tri-Valley League. Quite a bit of work ahead of us – process is very detailed. League constitution. Written description of alignment. Records vs. All Tri-Valley league schools. Previous affiliations and current school profile, town profile, geographic locations including distances. They want to know about traditional rivals? Provide narrative of why the change.

Athletic staff. Facilities. Athletic handbook. Need to inform MIAA Executive Director of the requested league change. Following procedure – gathering all facts and put package together. January 20<sup>th</sup> there will be a District C meeting. Topics to be brought up include the idea of conferencing. Pilgrim conference – leagues within a conference – group schools based on enrollment – didn't last too long. Look further into that.  
Mr. Ryan asked if there is a possibility of playing non-league football for a couple of years? No.

### **MINUTES**

Mr. Roberts moved, seconded by Ms. Matthews, to approve the November 5, 2008 minutes. And it was **VOTED:** to accept.

### **DONATIONS**

Jr. Women's Club – received by Science Teacher Assistant a \$ 500.00 donation Science discovery kits. Received from Mrs. Patricia Giouard, Treasurer of the organization.  
Ms. Connolly moved, with grateful appreciation, seconded by Ms. Matthews, also with grateful appreciation, and it was **VOTED:** unanimous to accept the donation

### **OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

SBRC – Will be conducting interviews at the MS for Project Manager tomorrow evening.  
Looking into starting a Special Education Sub-Committee to look into financing of Special Education. Mr. Healy, Mrs. Connolly, Mrs. Driscoll.  
Need to set up policy subcommittee meeting  
Budget Subcommittee on Monday Morning

### **ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

Dec. 10 meeting:  
Reception prior to meeting for the John and Abigail Adams Recipients, at the MS  
PTO and Community group updates

There is a need to continue executive session.

**VOTED:** to adjourn open session and return to executive session:  
Made by D. Roberts and seconded by Mr. Ryan and was voted: Unanimous